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THE
PEOPLE OF INDIA.

A SERIES OF

PHOTOGRAPHIC ILLUSTRATIONS

OF

THE RACES AND TRIBES OF HINDUSTAN,

ORIGINALLY PREPARED UNDER THE AUTHORITY OF

THE GOVERNMENT OF INDIA,

AND

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VOLUME SEVEN.

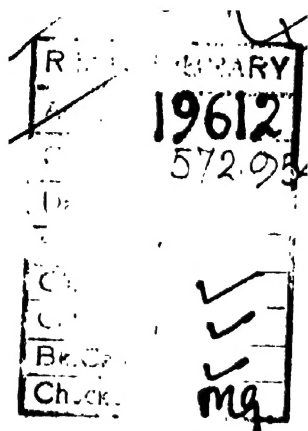
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VOL. VII.

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PURRIAR MEENAS.

(341)

THE robber tribe of Meena has been before illustrated at No. 204, Vol. IV. In that Plate a Meena and his wife are shown in their ordinary peaceful or working costume; but as the tribe is predatory and classes with those hereditary robbers who, though more reclaimed than they used to be, still prey upon the public at large in their own and adjacent localities, the present Plate is offered as an illustration of their appearance when armed for a foray. The figure at the right of the picture carries a bow and arrows, and his lance or spear rests against the thatch of the house. The figure opposite to him has a long lance, and his right hand grasps the head of a bamboo club encircled with heavy iron rings, a most deadly weapon in a strong man's hand; he has also a kuttar, or square handled dagger, in his waistbelt, and a bow with arrows at his back. The man behind these two holds a matchlock in his left hand, and his powder horn, bullet bag, &c., are disposed about his waist, and the sitting figure has also a matchlock. Two of the men have their faces tied up by a handkerchief, an ordinary method of disguise, or protection from either heat or cold, and assisting also to alter the voice.

According to the official description, these Meenas, as indeed was before stated, belong to an aboriginal race which originally inhabited that part of the country to the north of Rajpootana lying between Ajmere and the Jumna. There is at present only one tribe of pure Meenas, the Swaras, who are called Mairas. Of this there are said to be five thousand branches, one being the Mairs of Mairwarra, a lawless predatory tribe, whose reclamation to industrial pursuits, construction of tanks for irrigation, &c., form the subject of a most interesting work by the late Major Dixon, Political Superintendent of Mairwarra for several years. These Mairs are now industrious cultivators; and though the hereditary instinct of predatory life hardly ever becomes extinct, at least for several generations, yet the improvement of the people by education, and by successful agriculture, has advanced the condition and moral habits of the tribe to a great

extent, and the entire reclamation of all the Meenas and their subdivisions will, it may be hoped, be effected in time.

The group photographed is of Purriar Meenas, who are principally located in the Kerna, a hilly district in the vicinity of the town of Jehazpore of Meywar, in Rajpootana, where the borders of the independent states of Meywar, Jeypore, and Boondie meet, as also the south-eastern portion of the British district of Ajmere, near the military cantonment of the Deollee Irregular Force stationed at Deollee.

"They are said to be a cross between the Purriar Rajpoots of Marwar and the aboriginal Meenas of Rajpootana, and possess the independent pride and spirit of the former. They are an athletic, active, and brave people, tall, handsome, and fond of sport, eager after game, which they are expert in tracking; they are free and open in manner and conversation, obedient to the command of their leaders, and sensible of kindness, but bloodthirsty and revengeful. Their principal food is cakes of unleavened bread, made from the flour of Indian corn or millet, with herbs and boiled vegetables. They also eat largely of meat of all kinds, the cow excepted, and are more partial to the flesh of the wild hog than to any other animal food; they also drink freely of spirits and smoke tobacco."

Their principal weapons are the bow, spear, and kuttar. The latter is a kind of dagger about three or four inches broad at the hilt, and about a foot long, gradually fining down to a point. In the use of this weapon the Meenas are most expert, and one blow or thrust of the kuttar, if not fatal, causes a very severe wound. Many of them also possess matchlocks, and make excellent practice with them.

Every Meena in and about the district is, or has been, a robber. The whole tribe is lawless, and in no class has the crime of dacoity been so systematically followed as a profession as by the Purriar Meenas. They are employed as chowkeedars or guards throughout Rajpootana, and in this way they levy a species of black mail, and give notice to their brethren when any kind of valuable merchandize is likely to pass through the country. The Meenas then assemble in bands of twenty to thirty, or even one hundred, and when possessed of their booty, they return to their homes with such speed as to escape all detection. If pursued into one state, they take refuge with their brethren in another, and their fellow feeling is such, that they band together on the shortest notice.

"To such an extent had these robbers carried on their depredations, and so bold had they become, that no travellers or merchants with their goods could pass the vicinity of the Meena country without being plundered. The British Government remonstrated with the native chiefs on the state of the tribe, and in 1860 the Political Agent of Haraotee was also appointed Superintendent of the Meena Districts, when effectual measures were adopted, in co-operation with the

PURRIAR MEENAS.

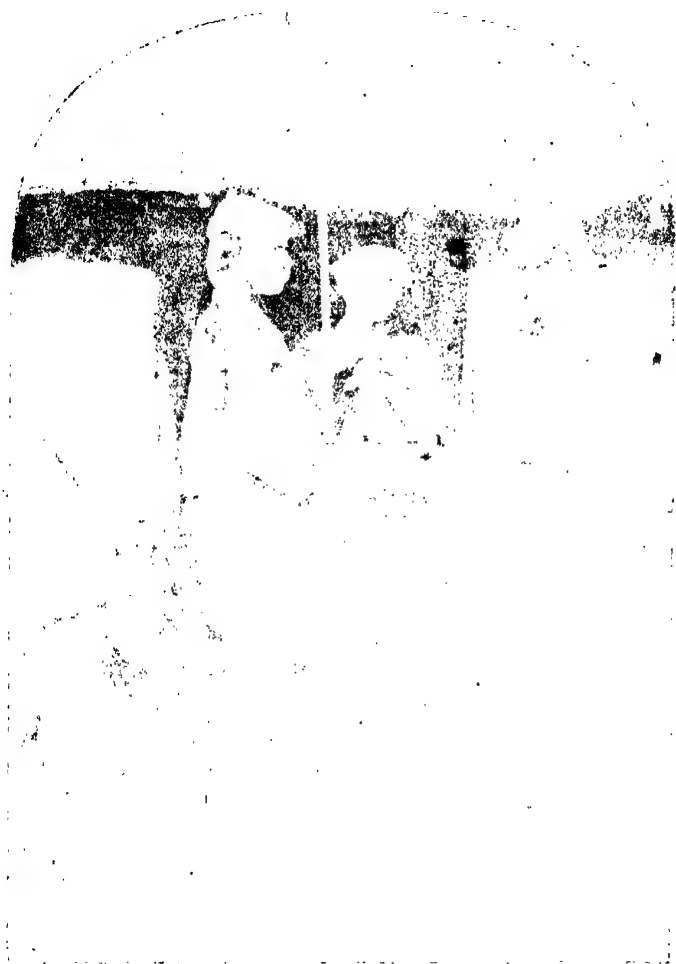
native chiefs, to punish the tribe for their lawlessness, and put a stop to their plundering for the future. A severe lesson was taught them by the execution of the ringleaders, and the imprisonment of others. These Meenas are now settled down in their villages, employed in agricultural pursuits, and, being closely watched, are restrained from robbing. Many too have been encouraged to take service in the infantry portion of the Deolce Irregular Force, and have turned out excellent soldiers.

"The height of the figure on the right hand is about five feet eleven inches, with grey eyes and light brown complexion, dressed in a coat of dark green, with a white dhoty or waistcloth, and a red turban. The centre figure is wrapped in a dark green cloth thrown round his shoulders, and tied in front, with a dirty white turban and dhoty. The man standing next him is dressed entirely in white, with green waistcloth. The man sitting down is in a black cotton coat, white dhoty, and turban. The eyes of these three are a deep brown."

The records of the Thuggee and Dacoitee departments abound with accounts of the depredations of the Purriar and other Meenas, and much of their persistence in crime is attributed to the influence of the women, who, while they excite the men to action by reciting legends of old (to them) heroic deeds, despise those who have forsaken the practices of their ancestors. It is evident, therefore, that the very closest watching and care is necessary for the future in the prevention, as far as possible, of this terrible hereditary crime, which is generally attended with murder; but Capt. Beynon, the Political Agent of Haraotce, from whose original report quotations have been made in this article, appears to have laid the foundation of eventual extirpation of dacoity and other crimes, which hitherto have been the glory of the Purriar Meenas.

We find no details or descriptions of any peculiar rites or customs of these Purriar Meenas which would show connection with the ancient Fetish aboriginal belief, nor indeed any trace of aboriginalism, except excessive superstition, belief in ghosts' appearances, and spirits, with the normal condition of lawlessness which belong to them. If aboriginal they show little trace of it in their appearance, in which Aryanism is highly developed. The grey or brown eyes, the fair or light brown skins, and tall stature, seem to be identical with Rajpoots, while they profess the same form of Hindooism, though they may be less exact in their religious observances.

It is satisfactory to observe, from the Political Reports up to 1871 and 1872, that the Meenas were perfectly well-disposed and tranquil, and that no serious crime exists among them, or had occurred in that year.



PURRIAR MEENAS.
ROBBER TRIBE.
RAJPOOTANA.

341.

HARA RAJPOOTS.

(342)

IN the preceding volumes, illustrations of Rajpoots, with descriptions, have been given in Plates 119, 120, 137, and 199, the article annexed to the latter being a general description of Rajpoots of all classes. No. 199 is a representation of a group of Chohan Rajpoots, and the present is one of the Haras, who claim to be the purest in descent of all the tribes. In this respect, however, the Chohans, the Rahtores, the Jharejas, and Kutoch, are equally pertinacious as to their claim to be first; nor can it be decided which of them has the pre-eminence of being descended from the warrior who arose from the cauldron of the Brahmins of Mount Aboo (*vide* 199). There is no doubt, however, that the Haras are still in possession of their original province or state, and it may be inferred from this fact that, having maintained their original position from a period of unknown antiquity to the present period; through all changes and revolutions of dynasties, their purity has been least affected. The Haras are the descendants of the Kshettrya warriors, who, from the same locality, marched to join the heroes who fought in the battle of the Mahabharat. They opposed the successive invaders of India till they met the Greeks in the fourth century before Christ. Ancient Sassanian, Persian, and Mahomedan hosts, before and after the irruptions of Mahmood of Ghuznee, had overrun the north-western portions of India in succession; but the Rajpoots were never conquered, and though they became feudal dependants of the Emperors of Delhi, were yet united and free. It is not wonderful then that a proud and martial class has maintained the position of its illustrious ancestry, and whether Hara or Chohan, Rahtore or Jahreja, claims to be pre-eminent above all. The Official Report which accompanies the Photograph says of the Haras:

“The Hara tribe of Rajpoots inhabit that part of Rajpootana named Haraotee. They claim descent from the family that ruled in Ajmere before the Mahomedans, and settled in their present possessions in A.D. 1342, of which Boondie is the capital, and out of which has sprung the separate state of Kotah. They are chiefly

HARA RAJPOOTS.

employed as soldiers by the chieftains of their own districts, and many are engaged as agriculturists.

"The Haras, like their brother Rajpoots, as a general rule have good features, are tall, handsome, and active, devoted to their chiefs, but proud and vindictive. Their food is unleavened bread, with boiled vegetables, clarified butter or oil, and spices. They also eat meat occasionally. They smoke tobacco and eat opium.

"The picture of the Hara Rajpoot group represents five soldiers in the service of his Highness the Maha Rao of Kotah, armed with matchlock, sword, and shield, their usual weapons. The figure on the left is dressed in a coat and waistcloth of white cotton cloth, and a yellow turban. The centre figure, standing against a tree, wears a padded cotton coat of rose colour, turban dark red, and waistband of white cloth. The man sitting in the foreground wears a coat of buff-coloured cotton, with white waistcloth and dark red turban. The right hand figure is dressed entirely in green, except the white waistcloth; and the man next to him is in a padded coat of light yellow, with white waistband and striped turban of red and yellow. The height of the man standing on the right is five feet nine inches."—W. H. BEYNON.

If the reader compares the group of Chohans (No. 199) with the Haras, he will find a general resemblance as to character of feature and bearing; and yet perhaps the Haras are the most impressive of the two—wilder, and more animated in their carriage and gestures. Their features, too, are more decidedly Aryan and regular. But all the clans of Rajpoots are distinguished everywhere in India by their national characteristics, and it is difficult to decide whether Hara or Rahtore, Chohan or Kutoch, has the pre-eminence.



HARA RAJPOOTS.

HARAOTEE.

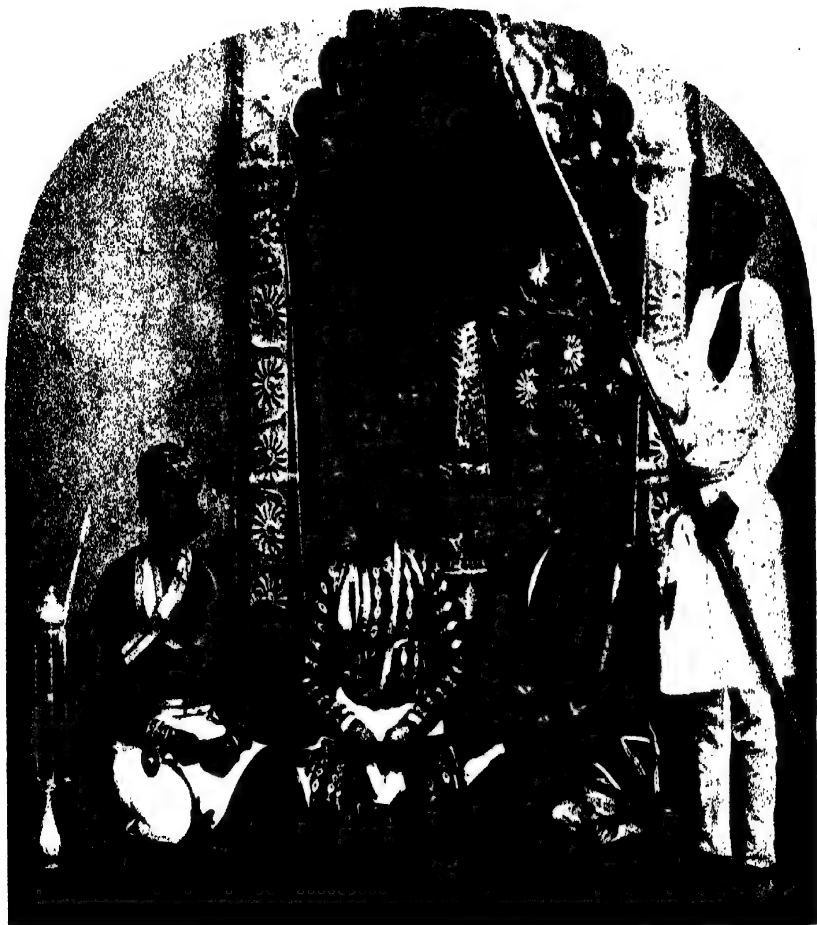
RAJPOOTANA.

JAT SIRDARS.

(343)

THE Jats, like the Rajpoots, have been already illustrated in several instances, and the reader will find descriptions of them with Plates 148, 151, and 192; but the group here represented is more pretentious in character, and depicts three persons of the upper class, sirdars or chiefs, sitting in a most respectful, but to them, truly uncomfortable manner, with their feet tucked under them, and their swords across their knees. They may be supposed to be seated in the presence of their Rajah, or of some greater person, yet they evidently hold, or at least, perhaps, the centre figure, considerable rank, as proved by the *af-tab-geer*, or sunshade, which no one but a man of rank can have carried before him. The group is seated on a carpet, and leans against thick heavy pillows, probably covered with velvet, and on the left hand of the left figure stands a small pretty hookah, usually termed *goorgoori*, with its silver chains, top, bowl, and mouthpiece, as befits a person of rank. Behind them is an embroidered screen, or *purdah*, which probably covers a door or window, and is commonly used in all good native houses instead of a door. The bamboos, which are inserted within it, keep it extended, and it can be rolled up from the bottom when necessary. The costumes of the three sitters are studiously plain, and are, perhaps, of quilted cotton and chintz, a favourite and necessary protection in cold weather; and the wearers are fine burly men, particularly the right hand figure. All Hindoos wear the front piece of the tunic tied on the right shoulder and breast of the tunic, and this is very evident in these persons. The man who holds the *af-tab-geer* is, however, as his dress shows, a Mussulman.

As the Official Report gives no description of this Photograph, it is impossible to state who the picture represents; but the beauty of the Plate renders it an interesting illustration of the fine tribe of Jats. It is probable, however, that they are attached to the state and court of the Maharajah of Bhurtpoor, who is the head of their tribe.



JAT SIRDARS.

HINDOOS.

RAJPOOTANA.

343.

JAT ZEMINDARS.

(344)

THE present subject can hardly fail to be acceptable, not only from the beauty and grace of the Photograph, but as an illustration of a party of well-to-do zemindars. The word zemindar means literally holder of land, and these are probably respectable Jat farmers, who are amusing themselves with a game at puchees, which in all parts of India is universal. The game is not unlike backgammon in principle, and is played with a number of cowries, which one of the players rattles in his hand, and throws upon the ground; as many as show the slits or openings in the shells count for the player, and there is considerable dexterity required in the caster to make as many slits as possible tell for his game. The board is usually made of cotton or woollen cloth, on which the squares for the men are sewn, and the men are moved according to the throws of the parties. At a first glance puchees (twenty-five) appears like draughts, very easy; but it is not so in reality, and requires a good deal of judgment and experience, and lookers-on occasionally suggest moves, or give general advice to the players. Such would seem to be the case on the present occasion. Three of the party are apparently intent upon the game, and the elder and the figure on his proper right are giving their advice. There is nothing particular in the dresses of these men. They are evidently of a comfortable class, as they all wear tunics. In short, the scene and the figures are of every day life, without restraint, and as such are welcome additions to these illustrations of native life in India. The seated figure sits on the edge of his bedstead, and holds in his hand a small hookah of brass, and of a form peculiar to Hindoos of Northern India, which is not inelegant.

As a class the Jats have little education. They leave learning entirely to their priests, who are Brahmins, and to their scribes; but they are excellent practical farmers, and their fine fields of corn, pulse, cotton, and other products, are the admiration of all that see them. The Jats hold Brahmins in great reverence, perhaps indeed in fear; no household ceremony, as marriage and the like, is undertaken without them, and they share the veneration that is

JAT ZEMINDARS.

bestowed on the sacred rivers Ganges and Jumna. The character of the Jats, as given by all reporters, is good: they are very intelligent, a fine race, while both men and women attain great age. As a rule the lower classes do not eat meat, though it is not prohibited, perhaps because they cannot afford it as well as the upper classes. The general food is grain made into unleavened bread, and eaten with dressed pulse, vegetables, sour and sweet milk, and the like. Rice is hardly used among them, except at festivals or household entertainments. "The Jat women, except of the very highest classes, do not conceal themselves, and the fact of this exception is due, no doubt, to Mussulman custom. Widows of low station, on their husband's death, usually live with their husband's brother as his wife, without any further ceremony; but should she prefer any other man, he is at liberty to take her, on paying a fine to her relations."—(*Official Report*). And no doubt many other interesting particulars of Jat domestic life and customs could be obtained by a closer special inquiry into their general and particular condition.



JAT ZEMINDARS.

HINDOOS.

RAJPOOTANA.

344.

GOOJUR SIRDARS.

(345)

THE Goojurs, a Hindoo tribe of the North-Western Provinces, have been already described and illustrated (*vide ante* Plates 148, 157, and 193); and in the article annexed to the latter Plate their general habits and character were given from the Official Reports, which are by no means of a flattering character. There are, however, sirdars or chiefs among them, and though the names of those represented in the Plate are not given, we may assume them, from the Political Agent's Report, to belong to the nobility of the Bhurtpoor state. "They have gained notoriety," it is recorded, "in the Bhurtpoor state owing to its being the custom, whenever a child is born, that a wet nurse is selected from their tribe; hence they have acquired great influence, and in the Bhurtpoor state are second only to the Jats, with whom they are not on terms of great friendship. In their marriage ceremonies they are the same as the Jats. They have very little education, and live to a great age."

There is no doubt, from their appearance, that these Goojur sirdars are well provided for, as their very gorgeous costumes of cloth of gold (kumkhab) and embroidered velvet amply testify; their turbans also are of fine muslin striped with gold tissue. Fine, stout, burly gentlemen truly, with broad chests and strong arms, warriors, too, no doubt; in their degree they are at least the equals of the Jat sirdars previously illustrated. Their attendant, whose figured coat may be cloth of gold, or possibly chintz, is also a remarkable figure, holding his silver staff, which is richly chased and ornamented. The staff itself is of wood, covered by plates of silver, which are ingeniously joined so as to bear the appearance of one mass. Beside him is a gorgeous hookah, which belongs to the figure on the left, and is a fine specimen of native art, the top, or cover, and bottom being evidently of silver and of graceful design; the long snake may be of black material wound round with gold thread, and the whole apparatus is very handsome. To those unacquainted with the hookah, the following brief description of it may be interesting:—The short and long stems are made of hollow bamboo or strong reed,

and are tied together at the neck of the water vase below, which is about half filled with water; the smoke is drawn through the snake, and the air being exhausted, the smoke descends through the largest reed, which supports the top on which is the prepared tobacco, through the water, and is thus inhaled pure. The snake is of tough pewter wire, curled, in rings, then covered with thin birch bark till air tight, round which are wound strips of coloured muslin, till the whole is smooth and neat, as shown in the Plate.

Here again we see one of the embroidered purdahs, or screens, before alluded to, and the patterns of the present, both in the borders and body of the screen, are remarkably effective; but of what material the whole is made no information is given.



GOOJUR SIRDARS.

HINDOOS.

RAJPOOTANA.

345.

GOOJUR ZEMINDARS.

(346)

THE Plate shows a party of Goojur zemindars, who are farmers and cultivators, with one of their strong and very useful carts. These are used for the transport of grain or forage to Agra, or any city or town of the North-West Provinces, and will carry heavy loads. The drivers frequently travel in companies, having taken contracts for carriage and safe delivery of goods, in which respect they are esteemed most trustworthy. They also accompany forces or regiments marching from one station to another, and in all respects form the chief transport of the Upper Provinces.



GOOJUR ZEMINDARS.

HINDOOS.

RAJPOOTANA

346.

KHAN ZADAS.

(347)

THIS striking and effective group of Khan Zadas evidently belongs to the agricultural class, as the wooden plough in the foreground, with its gear attached, plainly denotes. Two of the men are sitting upon a charpai or bedstead, one of whom has a small hookah in his hand. The tall man on the right leans upon the wooden yoke of the oxen, and both he and the person standing next to him appear to be speaking to the sitting figure, who may be master. The plough is solid, formed from a natural bend in the wood, which is generally acacia or mimosa, though any other hard tough wood answers. It is hewn roughly into shape by the village carpenter, but the projecting piece has always an inclination of a few degrees towards the earth. The coulter is a strong square bar of iron, which projects somewhat beyond the end of the wood, and is fastened in by stout staples. The transverse piece is the pole, to which the bullocks are attached for shaft. It goes through the head of the plough, and is retained by a stout peg behind, and a wedge which passes through, which can be tightened or slackened at will. Hanging on the beam is the rope gear, which is most frequently of green hide, and necessarily very strong. In appearance the Indian plough, which varies in no locality of the country, is a rude instrument; but it is nevertheless very effective. The time for ploughing is the hot or dry season, and the earth is broken into clods and turned over. On the first fall of rain these clods crumble and break, and form a very level surface, over which the drill plough easily passes. The action of the plough breaks and tears up by the roots all deeply rooted grasses and weeds, which a sharper instrument would only cut, and they are then dried and killed by the heat of the sun, and generally gathered together and burned, the ashes being spread over the ground as manure. A small plough like that represented is used for a light loamy soil, and requires two bullocks; but for heavier and more adhesive soils, larger implements, employing from four to twelve and fourteen oxen, are necessary.

KHAN ZADAS.

The Khan Zadas were originally Goojurs, but were converted to the Mussulman faith in the time of the Emperor Aurungzeeb, and are said to have taken their rise from the issues of the Pathans' intercourse with Goojur women. Khan is the title which every Pathan (or Afghan) assumes; hence Khan Zada, the khan's offspring, or literally, sons. The locality of the tribe is principally Mewat, which borders upon Rajpootana, and lies between those provinces and the Jumna, in 27° or 28° north latitude. The tribe is not migratory, and is well conducted and industrious as cultivators, though many of them take service, especially in the irregular cavalry, where they have always behaved well. Almost, as a rule, the Mewattee Khan Zadas are fine, handsome men, combining the sturdy figure of the Goojur with the grace of their Pathan progenitors, and they are hardy and brave. Their religion is ordinary Mahomedan, and in which they are believed to be bigoted, though not over strict in performance of it, showing, however, no difference in the observance of fasts and ceremonies. They are almost, as a rule, healthy and long lived, and they seclude their women, in accordance with Mussulman customs. It is not stated whether they intermarry with other Mussulman sects; but the probability is that they confine themselves to their own tribe, for in this respect all tribes of converted Hindoos appear to have the same custom.



KHANZADAS
MUSSULMANS.
RAJPOOTANA.

SADHS.

(348)

BY the official description, the Sadhs appear to be rather a limited sect than a separate tribe, since any Hindoo of good caste can enter it, and it contains Brahmins, Bunneas, Cheepers or dyers, goldsmiths, and many others. The word "Sadh" signifies "truth," and the Sadhs worship truth after their own fashion. They do not reverence idols, or the sacred rivers Ganges or Jumna, or join with other Hindoos in religious rites. They do not acknowledge any Hindoo incarnations of divinity, but profess to worship truth only as a deity. They never salute any one, even of the highest rank, and if any one salutes them, they never return the compliment. If it be possible, they may be termed Hindoo Quakers, in the affected purity and simplicity of their observances. They are not abundant, and are confined to Futtehgurh, Benares, and a few districts of the North-West Provinces, and are not known in other parts of India. They abstain from meat and spirits, and live upon grain, fruits, vegetables, and milk, like Brahmins. Their marriage ceremonies are peculiar: large assemblies or fairs are held by the tribe, when numbers collect, and from among the women gathered together a youth selects his bride, and their union is accomplished without any particular ceremony. The women are not married until they attain full age, and are at liberty to choose for themselves. They are not secluded after marriage, and have the reputation of being very faithful to their husbands. Sadhs are in general merchants and traders, and are very steady and successful in these pursuits; some of them, however, are farmers. They have no temples or set places of worship; but what their peculiar tenets are is not generally known, nor are they desirous of giving information in regard to them. It does not appear either that they have any regular priests or expounders of doctrine, these offices being exercised by their elders.



SADHS.
HINDOO SECT.
RAJPOOTANA.

GUDDDEES.

(349)

THE Guddees profess to be a Mussulman tribe converted from low caste Hindooism in the reign of Aurungzeeb. They are cultivators, and keep and breed cattle to a large extent. They are by no means pure Mussulmans, but adhere to ancient Hindoo belief in many instances. In marriages some families employ Kazees, and the rites are conducted according to Mussulman customs; in others, the services of Brahmins are engaged, and the marriage is Hindoo. They profess to worship according to Mussulman belief, but they hold the goddess Devi or Bhowance, in her incarnation of setla or small pox, in veneration and fear, and other minor deities of Hindooism are invoked and propitiated on many occasions. Thus the old state of low caste Hindooism is preserved as a foundation, while the superstructure of Mussulman conversion sits very lightly upon them. Their principal locality is the Dooab of the North-Western Provinces, but they are also found in the Ulwar and Bhurtpoor states of Rajpootana. They are a mild inoffensive people, and, as a class, of good behaviour, peaceful, industrious, and long lived. They eat meat, and drink spirituous liquors, but not to any excess. With their large herds of cattle they possess numbers of carts, both for transport of goods and as travelling vehicles. The cart shown here is one for riding or travelling in. As represented, the curtains on the right side are thrown over the top, but when let down they conceal the inmates from observation. As a vehicle, nothing can be more inconvenient or more rough, and the passenger has to assume a painfully cramped position which cannot be changed. It is, however, very strong, yet light, and with the well-trained bullocks employed can make a long journey in a day.



GUDDLES
MUSSULMANS.
RAJPOOTANA.

MEOS.

(350)

THE Meos are another instance of Hindoos partially converted to Mussulman profession. They assert that they were originally Goojirs of a high class, but were forcibly converted by the Emperor Aurungzeeb, or at least in his reign, and adopted the Mussulman faith in dread of losing their lands. They are by no means so much Mussulmans as the Guddees, for members of a family will have Hindoo or Mussulman names as it may happen, and all observe many Hindoo ceremonies and domestic customs, while some worship as Mussulmans, others as Hindoos. Their women are not secluded, and they marry exclusively in their own tribe.

The Meos are found for the most part in Mewat, a tract of country bordering upon Bhurtpoor, Ulwar, and Goorgaon, of the Delhi district. They are not migratory or unsettled. While they profess to be Mussulmans, they have great veneration for a local saint, Salar, by whom they swear. Salar is a Mussulman name, and may probably be that of the person by whom their conversion, such as it is, was made. Their principal occupation is cultivating the soil, but they have not a good character in general, being addicted to thieving and cattle lifting. The Meos eat meat, drink spirits, and are in no respect abstinent. It will be remarked, perhaps, in relation to all the Photographs of these half-converted tribes, that they wear the Hindoo dhoty, or loose cloth, instead of the Mussulman pajama, or drawers. In other respects the costume requires no remark: it is that common to all agricultural classes.



MEOS.
MUSSULMANS.
RAJPOOTANA.
350.

GOLAHs.

(351)

THE Golahs are a low class caste or tribe of Hindoos, but by no means one of the outcast tribes; they are at least Sudras, ranking with ordinary cultivators. They are, however, exclusive, and do not intermarry with others. Among Hindoos any profession or particular occupation grows to be a separate caste, and the members of it do not mix with others. Thus the Golahs are professional salt makers, while they are also general cultivators; for it is only in the hottest weather that they can carry on their work as salt makers. Certain localities and descriptions of soil are much impregnated with salt. Sometimes, as the weather grows dry and hot, a good deal is developed by efflorescence, and is then gathered up, but much is made in the following manner:—the salt earth is dug up, and put into large earthen jars, where it is diluted with water and well stirred; it is then left to settle, and as the mud descends, the brine is drawn off and emptied upon shallow pans made of concrete, where the water is allowed to evaporate; the salt is then scraped together, left to bleach and dry, and is fit for use. When the salt manufacture is on a larger scale, troughs are used instead of vessels, and the mud, as it settles, allows the brine to be drawn off at certain elevations one above another. The result is the same in both instances, the salt produced being at first a yellow colour, but becoming perfectly white and crystallized in minute crystals in the process of drying. Some of the salt thus made is very sweet and good; other kinds are harsh and bitter, but are used for cattle, or for pickles and other condiments.

In domestic customs and religion, the Golahs do not differ from the Jats or Gojurs in any remarkable degree. They worship the greater Hindoo divinities and Brahmins, but, like others of the lower Hindoo classes, they probably pay most reverence to the lower deities of the earliest Hindooism, or aboriginal belief, which may be termed Fetichism. Their women are not secluded, and assist their families both in field labour and in salt making. Baskets of salt are shown in the Photograph, as a strong hoe with which the salt earth is dug out. The

GOLAHs.

hotter the season, the more profitable is the out-turn of salt. It is not only more plentiful, but of better quality, and the crystals are stronger; so that under the constant attention it requires, in watching the condition of the brine, in reference to its transference from one evaporating pan to another, the occupation is an arduous one. The Golahs are considered a gentle, honest class, and no habitual crime is attributed to them. As a rule they are very industrious, and are not migratory or unsettled. In regard to the salt they produce, the rent or taxes is usually levied on the lands, which are either let by private contract or by auction. In some cases certain families or villages have enjoyed the right of certain lands for generations, and these rights are respected. In others the ground is common to all, and therefore open to annual competition. Again, the salt produced may be weighed or measured, and an excise duty placed on it. The Golahs' occupation is hereditary, and in all parts of India, though the caste may have different appellations, is confined to itself. The Golahs eat meat occasionally and drink spirits, but not to any excess, and their general diet is vegetarian.



GOLAHS.
LOW CASTE HINDOO TRIBE.
RAJPOOTANA

LODHAS.

(352)

THOUGH the Lodhas do not rank with the highest class of cultivators, they are yet a useful and industrious class, principally inhabiting Bhurtpoor, and other native states in Rajpootana and the North-West Provinces. In religion and customs there is little or no difference between them and the same classes of Jats, Goojurs, Koormees, and other agricultural classes. The figure on the right is leaning upon the yoke of his bullocks, and the rope is intended for raising water, as appears from the pulley over which it runs, and here has broken the coil. Lodhas are in general fine able men, hardy, and active; but they have not the best of characters, being often turbulent and thievish; some of them enlist as sepoy's, and make good soldiers.



LODHAS.
LOW CASTE HINDOO TRIBE.
RAJPOOTANA.

MAHARAJAH OF BHURTPOOR.

(353)

THE Photograph is an excellent illustration of a native independent chieftain of the highest class, in his durbar or court. The young prince sits in the centre on his guddee or royal seat, which is of velvet richly embroidered with gold, and the cushion behind him is of the same; across his turban is the sirpench or head ornament, which is probably of diamonds; with the jika or high feather ornament, also of diamonds, in the centre of it, and a tassel of pearls at the left side. His dress, probably of velvet or fine English cloth, is plain, except the gold lace with which it is trimmed, and his sword lies on his knees. Behind him are four servants, two of whom, outside, hold mirchuls of peacocks' feathers, and the chourree of yak's tail hair; another, possibly the prince's pan and spice box. Behind these is a gorgeous curtain, which forms an appropriate back ground, and two aftar-geers, each of different pattern, are held by attendants. In two rows on each side of the Rajah, the nobles and sirdars of the state are seated, who may be relatives, or officers in various departments of the state services. It would have been interesting to know who they are, but the official record gives no information whatever in regard to them.

In former notices of the Jats, the history of Bhurtpoor has been slightly sketched from the foundation of the state in the reign of the Emperor Aurungzeeb, to the political transactions with Lord Lake in 1805: the first siege of Bhurtpoor in that year, and the second and final attack on the 18th January, 1827, when the massive mud walls were breached by mines, and the place stormed and captured. Since then, the prestige of Bhurtpoor has passed away; its walls were thrown into the ditch, and the whole levelled, and instead of being a hotbed of rebellion and intrigue, the influence of which was once felt throughout India, the state is now orderly and loyal, and its military classes have, for the most part, literally turned their swords into plough shares; but the state keeps up enough troops to employ such as still adhere to a military profession.

The Photograph appears to have been taken in 1862, when the Maharajah

MAHARAJAH OF BHURTPOOR.

was about eleven years old, a minor under education, and when the affairs of his state were conducted by a council of regency, presided over by the Political Agent at his court. In February, 1874, he entered his twenty-third year. On the 10th June, 1869, he was invested with the administration of Bhurtpoor; but being still under age, with some restrictions, which were removed by a petition from his nobles being acceded to in 1871. In 1873 he requested that the Political Agent should not reside at Bhurtpoor, which was also complied with, so that he has now the absolute control of his own affairs in all respects without interference.

The Maharajah's name is Jeswunt Singh, his titles Maharaja Dhiraj Sewaye Brijendur-Jeswunt Singh Bahadoor. The revenues of his state in 1871-2 were Rs. 2,787,214, or about £276,721 sterling, the Bhurtpoor rupee being of somewhat less value than the government coinage. He maintains a force of 1,500 cavalry, and 7,400 infantry, artillery, and mounted police, with twenty-one field guns, and seventeen in his forts. He has been carefully educated, and is acquainted with English, Persian, and Hindee the vernacular of his principality. He is a most promising native ruler, and bids fair to maintain his high position with loyalty to the British Government, and good effect to his people.

During the Maharajah's minority, the state affairs were managed by a council of regency presided over by the English Political Agent, and the result was beneficial to the state. The revenue has increased by six lacs, £60,000, and many improvements, such as irrigation works, roads, hospitals, dispensaries, &c., were commenced; and it is satisfactory to observe that these good works will be carried on by His Highness. During the visit of H.R.H. the Duke of Edinburgh to India in 1869, the Maharajah went to Calcutta to meet him, and invited him to Bhurtpoor, where he was entertained in a sumptuous manner. It is to be regretted that the Maharajah lost his son and heir, and also the Maharanee, in the year 1869; the boy had long been delicate as well as his mother.



H.H. THE MAHARAJAH OF BHURTPOOR.

HINDOO JAT.

IN DURBAR, RAJPOOTANA.

DHANGEES.

(354)

THIS group consists of a young Dhangree chief, Rajah Krishna, and a relation probably, sitting by him, with four attendants behind, one of whom carries a chowree of yak's tail. The young chief is superbly dressed in cloth of gold, but seems particularly ill at ease in his unaccustomed seat, and he holds his sword upright resting upon his right shoulder. The Official Report gives no clue as to who he is, except that he resides at Belhara, near Saugor, but states that the Dhangees are cultivators, of quiet peaceable habits, similar in all respects to ordinary Hindoos in religion and mode of life. The Dhangees inhabit a portion of the Central Provinces, usually termed Dhangewar, the ancient rulers and chiefs of which had considerable local influence, now declined. One of their chiefs, according to Grant, was made Jahgeerdar of the town and Pergunna of Karai, thirty-two miles north-west of Saugor, and built the fort there; and the tribe is numerous about Saugor, where the Dhangees are among the best agriculturists. They are not migratory or unsettled, and bear a good character in all respects. The young rajah represented was a pupil in the Government school at Saugor in 1862, and it may be hoped received a good practical education to fit him for his duties in life.



DHANGEES

HINDOOS.

SAUGOR.

354.

SAONRAS.

(355)

THE Saonras are one of the sections of the aboriginal tribes of the Central Provinces, not far separated from the Gonds, either in appearance or in habits; but they have the credit of being one of the most industrious and peaceful of the jungle tribes. Their occupations are cultivation and the collection of jungle products, such as honey, bee's wax, fruits, &c., by the sale of which they maintain themselves. They are most numerous about Rajgurn, but appear to have no very settled habitation. Their manner of life, customs, and worship, seem, even by Grant's *Gazetteer*, to be unknown, and they are even rarely mentioned, and then only in connection with other tribes like themselves. They do not appear, like Gonds and Bheels, to bear arms, and probably are too limited in number to attract much attention. They do not intermarry with the Gonds, who probably esteem them a lower race than themselves.



SAONRAS.
ABORIGINAL TRIBE.
SAUGOR.

KOORMEES.

(356)

KOORMEES, or Kumbis, are Sudra Hindoos of good rank in the social scale all over India, a most industrious and hard-working people wherever they are found, with no imputation of normal crime attached to them, respected by all classes, and of most respectable bearing and conduct in all relations of life. By hereditary occupation they are farmers and tillers of the soil, and rarely betake themselves to other occupations in life, and never become artisans. Many of them are, for their degree in life, rich, farming large areas of land, and possessing large means in cattle, grain, and other property; others are necessarily in worse circumstances, and the lowest descent is to a day labourer in the establishment of one of their own class. Koormees marry Koormees only, but there are many gotes, or divisions of the caste, to which each gota is confined with but few exceptions. They are subject to the Brahmins in matters of faith and ceremony, but they have gooroos, or priests of their own, sometimes of their own caste, or men who have taken ascetic vows, such as Bairagees, Gosains, and the like, and not a few have entered separate and independent sects, as Kabir Punthis, and other corresponding dissenters. Those who have joined the Kabir Punthi sect abstain from meat and spirituous liquors, but others take them in moderation, any excess in drink being punishable by caste rules, and courts which inflict fines for all irregularities.

With all practical operations of farming, the Koormee, or Kumbi, is perfectly familiar; he knows the quality of soils, when to plough, and when to employ only the surface hoe; he also knows the value of manure, when to use it and when to refrain from using it; he knows the best rotation of crops, and practically observes them; in short, he is a master of his business, of which every detail is familiar to him, and is practically good; for nowhere in the world will be found better dressed land, or finer crops of all kinds than those raised by the Koormees.

In their domestic relations the Koormees are equally admirable; they make good husbands, and their women are chaste and faithful. Polygamy is uncommon,

KOORMEES.

and only resorted to in case of barrenness of the first wife. The women are excellent mothers and housewives, generally neat and clean in their persons, and keeping their houses well; they do not affect fine clothes or many ornaments, though they have some for great occasions. The wife helps her husband in much of the field work, weeding, picking cotton, watching the fields, and helping at harvest time. She is not much of a needlewoman, but can make her own bodices and her husband's ordinary jackets; other more ambitious garments, such as the wadded coats worn by the figure in the Photograph, being committed to the village tailor. Home occupations are various, for she gets up early and helps to grind the daily corn, and to make the bread, to have hot water ready for her husband's bath, and to bathe herself; to provide breakfast, after the little family worship, when she receives the pure caste mark with her children from her husband. When he is gone, she may have to go to the well, or tank, or brook, to wash the clothes of the house, to wash the floors with liquid mud, plastered on by her hands; to churn butter, if there be cows or buffaloes, and to boil the butter into ghee; and after all is finished, she can sit in the shade of her house wall, or under a tree or porch, and join a party of gossips who spin, and her wheel goes merrily round till evening, when she lights the house lamp, and her hungry husband has to get his dinner. This is the everyday life of a Koormee woman wherever she is found. She is rarely handsome, but she is strong, and, if much exposed, becomes hard-featured. Certainly hers is no life of sloth or luxurious indulgence, and though there are many Koormee dames, whose position enables them to keep both male and female servants, she never shrinks from her own share of the household work, but performs all the delicate portions of it herself, and some of the rougher, too, in her turn.

In some parts of the country Koormees are averse to bearing arms, or to using them. Many have none in their possession; but there are others where the general population is of a more martial character, and the Koormee takes his place among them; for there were troublous times long ago, when his ancestors ploughed their fields with their matchlocks hanging at their backs, and when they watched their ripening crops armed with sword and buckler. Time and change have not altered the simple, manly, patient Koormee; what he was, 3,000 years ago, nay, more perhaps, he is now.

The Kabir Punthi faith, to which so many of the Koormee population of Central India belongs, rose about 420 to 450 years ago, from one Kabir or Kubeer, who preached against the Brahminical faith and distinction of caste, idolatry, and the Pooranic belief, and thus established a sect which has increased far and wide, and extended to many parts of the Deccan. The apostle of the sect in succession now lives in Kawarda, a town of the province of Chhattis Gurh, and has numerous priests and disciples under him; and its votaries have continued to

KOORMEES.

multiply, till they now include about 38 per cent. of the local Hindoo population ; for, besides the Koormees, several classes of agriculturists, with weavers and others, have joined it. The followers of the sect are prohibited from eating flesh or drinking spirits, or smoking tobacco, and they do not profess caste, though they adhere to the classes into which they are divided, and intermarry with them only. Grant's *Gazetteer*, article "Bilaspore," contains much interesting information regarding the local sects of the province, to which we must refer our readers, being too long for extract here.



KOORMEES.

HINDOO CULTIVATORS.

SAUGOR.

356.

RAO KRISHN RAO.

(357)

RAO KRISHN RAO is a Mahratta pundit, who resides at Saugor. As he forms one of a group (No. 359), in which others of his class are represented, further mention of him here is unnecessary; and, indeed, no particulars are given of him, either as to his services, his attainments, or his present position.



RAO KRISHN RAO.

HINDOO.

SAUGOR

357.

LODHIS.

(358)

THE Lodhis are a tribe of cultivators who much resemble Jats. Many years ago a number of them emigrated from the Upper Provinces and settled in the Nerbudda valley of the Central Provinces, and also in the Pundara district. They are good farmers, but disposed to turbulence and quarrels among themselves, and they were by no means peaceable during the rebellion, being much given to plundering and aggressions on their neighbours. In regard to habits, customs, and language (Hindee), there is nothing particular to remark upon, but, though Hindoos, they do not seem to have any particular reverence for Brahmins.



LODHAS.

HINDOOS.

SAUGOR.

358.

MAHRATTA PUNDITS.

(359)

THIS group represents a class which has not as yet been illustrated. The members of it are Mahratta Brahmins, who, as long as the Mahrattas governed the provinces of Saugor and Jubbulpoor, acted as local administrators, or held offices as clerks, agents, and ministerial officers, or exercised their profession as Brahmin priests in the performance of domestic ceremonies, giving public or private recitations of the Vedas and Shastras. As the power of the Peshwabs extended on all sides, a large field was open for the employment of intelligent Brahmin youths, and they were, as a rule, not only well educated in their own language, but in Sanscrit at the public college in Poona, and in the schools which sprung up everywhere. While the superior officers and chieftains were illiterate, most of them being unable even to sign their names, the Brahmins became clerks, secretaries, managers, and the like, and exclusive of religious profession had a monopoly of all learning necessary for public life. They were excellent accountants and secretaries, and most faithful to their employers. Some of them even became soldiers on emergent occasions, and brave and judicious commanders of large armies. The *History of the Mahrattas* by the late Colonel Grant Duff, Malcolm's *Central India*, and many other standard works, give repeated illustrations of the real value of the Mahratta Brahmins, their high intellectual capacity, perseverance, true faith, and even devotion, in various capacities; and to the present day they are employed under the British Government in all departments with distinguished usefulness and merit. Apt at public business, they serve as native judges, commissioners, collectors, surveyors, architects, and civil engineers; they are also physicians, lawyers, advocates, and pleaders of great mental clearness and capacity, and they are professors in native colleges and schoolmasters all over the country. The study of English is popular among them, and some attain great perfection both in speaking and writing it. At foreign courts they master Persian, and in short, by their intellectual powers, are sure of success wherever they are employed. Every

MAHRATTA PUNDITS.

Englishman who has had them under him, will willingly testify to their clear-headed methodical habits, and their unwearied assiduity in business of all kinds. In trade they are steady successful merchants; but their talents are not so conspicuous in this respect as in civil or diplomatic affairs. In the latter they are in their element, and are rare adepts in intrigue and contrivance, having few scruples, moral or religious, and no abstract love of truth when falsehood will serve their purposes.

Brahmins are, for the most part, true Aryans, and probably Mahratta Brahmins are as pure as any that exist at present in India. At what period they reached the Deccan has, we believe, never been determined; but as obvious traces of Brahminism extend far beyond the Christian era, they may possibly have accompanied Ram, King of Oude, in his invasion of the south, and acted as missionaries in the conversion of the aboriginal population to Hindooism, and contributed very materially to their civilization. They appear to have abounded as much in the kingdom of the south at, and before, the period of Alexander's invasion, as they did in the north. The Turanian people of Southern India recognise the Mahratta Brahmins as true Aryans, and their language is called "Arya mat," Aryan speech, to this day in the Canarese and Telooogo tongues. Mahratta Brahmins are of two general sects, one followers of Vishnu, the others of Siva under the appellation of Smarth. Those who serve as priests, indeed all generally speaking, recognise the Poorans; but there are a great number who profess the pure theism of the Vedas, and who study and preach the Vedantic doctrines instead of the Pooranic, which are confined, for the most part, to priests who serve popular idols, and recite the legends of the gods and demigods represented by them. In the group illustrated, all the persons have Sivaic marks on their foreheads, and are therefore votaries of Mahadeo or Siva, and may be descended from the disciples of the great Shunkar Acharya, who preached the doctrines of Siva throughout the southern peninsula about the twelfth century.

Mahratta Brahmins esteem themselves of purer lineage and observance than the northern Brahmins, even of Bengal or Benares, and are most particular in their diet. They do not eat flesh or fish under any circumstances, or drink spirits, even at sacrifices; and they are very careful observers of all ceremonials. In caste discipline they are very strict, being under the religious supervision of their superior Swamees, or spiritual princes, who have certain jurisdictions, subdivided under agents or legates, who travel about, check flagrant immorality, and prepare youths for the sacrament of "moodra," or confirmation. If this spiritual supervision does not actually prevent immorality among Brahmins, it certainly materially controls it.

The present group consists of Brahmins who are representatives of families

MAHRATTA PUNDITS.

that have been long settled in the Saugor and Nerbuddah provinces; but they keep up their connection with their parent land, and do not make local marriages, usually going to the Deccan to contract them. They retain their own language perfectly, and from their high class as Brahmins, and their learning, are much respected and esteemed. Brahmins, in general, wear very plain clothes, and when serving in a priestly capacity have nothing on the head or upper part of the body; but in these instances the figure on the right of the picture wears cloth of gold with a blue ground: the second, cloth of gold with a pink ground: the third, a red silk coat with gold lace: the fourth, a blue silk coat with gold lace; the turbans, scarves, &c., of all are of like and suitable richness. Rao Krishn Rao has received a title of honour, Rao Sahib, and a medal for good services from Lord William Bentinck, which he is fond of displaying. The rest are pensioners according to the rank they held in the native service, while they still continue their priestly profession. It is to be regretted that further particulars are not given of this remarkable group in the official detail, for the intellectual face and remarkable figure of Rao Krishn Rao, and his being represented with English books near him, leads to the inference that he is a superior English scholar. The group is contributed by Lieut. Waterhouse, of the Royal Artillery, by whom the whole of the series of Jubbulpoor, Saugor, Indore, Bhopal, &c., were taken, when he was specially employed for the purpose by the Government of India. In the ease and admirable combination of many of the subjects, true artistic skill has been manifested.



MAHRATTA PUNDITS.

BRAHMING.

SAUGOR.

359.

TOOLSEE.

(360)

TOOLSEE is an old dacoit of Central India, and is imprisoned at Jubbulpoor, where he has become an approver against dacoits. He has assisted in eleven cases of dacoity, in which one person was killed and ten wounded, and booty obtained to the value of Rs. 5,872, or £587 4s.

Dacoity used to be a normal crime in Central India, perhaps it is so still, though it has been much checked by the energy of the thuggee and dacoity department, whose operations extend all over the petty independent states of that tract of India in which, on payment of a portion of their booty to the chiefs, these criminals used to receive protection. Dacoits are not a caste or a class; they may be Hindoos of any caste, even the very lowest, or Mahomedans; but in many families the practice of the crime is hereditary, and the members join others similarly situated in the commission of the robberies, which are called dacoities. A dacoity is burglary attended by violence, and is classed in a higher degree in the penal code and criminal regulations than burglary by breaking through a wall or door, and stealing without assaulting or hurting the inhabitants of the house. A dacoity is a thoroughly deep planned scheme, and carried out with a degree of audacity and discipline that is hardly conceivable. A house, say of a banker, merchant, farmer, or other rich person, is watched for several days by spies, who observe where it can be most easily attacked, ascertaining, if possible, where valuables are kept or concealed. The gang then assemble, in strength equal to the enterprise, and proceed to the locality; in some instances, attacks are made by daylight, but generally at night. The leader of the party first posts men in the streets leading to the house, who have orders to strike down any one who approaches. The body of the gang then goes on to the door of the house, or gate, which is battered in by axes: torches are lighted, and the whole rush in, spearing any one who opposes them or creates alarm, and the plunder is then carried off, the scouts covering the rear of the party till they gain the open country outside the village, where they generally separate, and meet at a

TOOLSEE.

place of rendezvous previously agreed upon. The crime prevails all over India, and is common to all classes of people, not excepting Brahmins and Rajpoots. Dacoits, like Thugs, are very superstitious, and worship the axe which is carried by the leader, and is used in breaking open bolts, padlocks, hinges, &c. This axe is a heavy one, thickly made, and with an edge of highly tempered steel. It is borne in a silk cover at the back of the person in whose charge it is, who carries also its helve in his hand; when required, the helve is easily fitted, and the weapon becomes most efficient. The axe is sacred to Bhowanee or Devi, and is kept wrapped in silken cloths and perfume till it is required for a piece of business; it is then taken out, bathed with ceremony, sacrifices made, and incense burned to it, after which the omens are observed, and the expedition sets out, or not, as the omens may direct.



TOOLSEE.

HINDOO DCAIT.

WUBBULPOOR.

360.

NOOR KHAN.

(361)

THIS man is a prisoner for life and approver in the jail at Jubbulpoor. He is a native of the district of Baragaon, in Gualior, and is a Mussulman. His confessions record five cases of Thuggee, in which twenty-one persons were strangled, and booty to the amount of Rs. 15,700 (£1,570) obtained. He was apprehended and tried in 1835, and has been in confinement since then. His age, if he is still living, may be about seventy-eight.

The crime of Thuggee has been so fully illustrated by English writers, that a very brief description of it will suffice here. It is a very ancient practice, for the Thugs recognise *bas-relief*, representing it among the ornaments in the Kylas temple of the caves of Ellora, which is probably of the seventh to ninth century of the Christian era: and was existent literally in every part of India at the period of its fortunate discovery by the late Major-General Sleeman. Thuggee was hereditary in certain families, Hindoo as well as Mussulman; and both sects practised it under the same conditions, ceremonies, and superstitious observances, which related to the goddess Bhowanee or Devi, of whom the Thugs are votaries. Thugs had a slang language, by which they could converse and give their orders unknown to their victims. They had officers in each gang, the leader, the persuader, the strangler, the gravedigger, and the scout; and each gang was told off into these positions, and performed their several offices with exactness. The most honourable of these grades were the stranglers, who needed to be bold, resolute, active men, and they received a higher share of booty than the others. When there was no general police throughout India, where an infinite number of petty states existed, and the protection given in all to travellers was of the feeblest description, the practice of Thuggee afforded a large and easy booty. A gang of Thugs appeared like an ordinary company of travellers, enticed similar parties into their company, and murdered them wherever they could; no one missed them, or if they were missed, any clue to their fate was impossible.

Nothing could exceed the vigour by which, upon their discovery, the Thugs

NOOR KHAN.

were hunted down: and few escaped capture. Hundreds were hanged, and thousands sentenced to transportation beyond sea, or to imprisonment for life. Some offered service as approvers, and were allowed to live on condition of denouncing all their associates, and proving the crimes alleged against them.

Jubbulpoor was fixed upon as a central jail, where many of the Thug prisoners were to be kept for life; but it became difficult to find employment for them all, and at last a school of industry was formed, and they were patiently taught many trades of a useful nature, weaving cloths of cotton and woollen, making tents for Government and private individuals, &c. The weaving is truly admirable: and from the coarse double thread cotton canvas of which tents are made, to fine towels, horsecloths, tablecloths and napkins, the series is complete. For carpets the wool is dyed, carded, spun, and woven, and fabrics that quite rival Axminster or Persia are produced. They are expensive but durable, far beyond any others. The wives and children of these quondam murderers are allowed to remain with them, and help in the local manufactures. At first some of the Thug approvers escaped; but they were quickly tracked, tried, and hung, and escape is not attempted now. No trace of Thuggee has been found for some years past, and it may be hoped that it is extinguished; but so long as any germ of this atrocious and apparently most fascinating crime exists, the utmost care and supervision is necessary to prevent its being resumed.



NOOR KHAN
MUSSULMAN THUG
SAUGOR.

RAJAH OF GUNGYEE.

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AS this person is not mentioned in any of the official lists, and his locality, Gungyee, is not to be found in Grant's *Gazetteer*, or under the head Nursingpoor, it can only be assumed that he is one of the petty chiefs with whom that province abounds. They are partly Gond, partly Rajpoot, and have no influence beyond their limited area of possession and its scanty population.



RAJAH OF GUNGYEE.

HINDOO.

NURSINGPOOR.

362.

BHEELS OF THE VINDHYAN RANGE.

(363)

THE group of Bheels, or Bhils, is taken from members of the Malwah Bheel corps, and the men have a much more civilized look than in their native condition. They have been drilled, and are soldiers of government, which has improved them. The five men are accompanied by four women, one of whom is somewhat good looking; but the Bheels, for the most part, are an extremely ugly race, and like most of the aboriginal tribes, have features peculiar to themselves.

Two of the great Central India chains of mountains are inhabited by Bheels, the Vindhya and Satpooora; but they extend from these in all directions to a limited distance, still, however, adhering to mountain ranges, and their spurs and offsets. Westward their places are filled by Grassias, while north-west are Moenas, south and south-east Korkoos, Gonds, and other cognate tribes; but the Bheels are distinct from all, and probably the most ancient. All the Hindoo tribes recognise their great antiquity, and acknowledge them as lords of the soil, paying them certain proportions of crops, as well in respect of original right, as to protect themselves from plunder and injury. In all ethnological classifications of the wild tribes of India, the Bheels are recognised as descendants of an aboriginal race; that is, they far exceed the Aryan in antiquity of local possession, and by their adherence to mountain fastnesses and deep forests, they may be classed with those now local tribes from whom the Aryans wrested the low-lying fertile lands, and drove them gradually to the mountain ranges. The same result appears in all other parts of India where wild tribes in the Himalayas, in the western and eastern Ghauts, and the like, hold no place in the lowland population, but are confined to the localities which they now inhabit.

A legend of the origin of the Bheels is to be found, according to Lieut. Waterhouse, in the *Svi Bhugwat*, book 4, chapter xvi., to the following effect:—"Centuries ago, the Rajpoot King of Hindoostan had two sons: the eldest named Nisbad, being black and deformed, with red eyes, his father sent him to the

uninhabited wastes and jungles, telling him he might cultivate where he chose. Subsequently twenty-two sons were born to Nisbad, who supplied themselves with wives from the surrounding population, and each son assumed the name of the caste to which his wife belonged. Thus there are at present many tribes of Bheels in the Vindhyan range, and in the districts of Ali Rajpoot, Jhabana, Banswara, and Rutlam, such as the Wania, said to be descended from the Bunnea, the Rathore from the Rajpoots, the Banwa from the Brahmins."

According to popular tradition, the Bheels are said to be descended from a son of Mahades, remarkable from his infancy for his ugliness and vice, who, having slain his father's favourite bull, was expelled to the woods and mountains, and his descendants have ever since been stigmatized with the names Bheels and Nishada, terms which denote outcasts. From the tradition it also appears that they were first settled in Marwar, or Jodpoot, but being driven thence by other tribes, chiefly the Rajpoots, they emigrated southwards, and settled among the mountains that form the western boundaries of Malwah and Khandesh, in the lofty ranges of the Vindhya and Satpoora, where, protected by the strong and difficult nature of the country from the oppression which had driven them into exile, they have since dwelt, subsisting partly on their industry, but mainly on the plunder of the rich in the vicinity of their haunts. This account is further confirmed, as corroborated by the history of the Rajpoot chiefs of Joudhpoot and Oodeypoor, which state that those countries were conquered from the Bheels, and in this respect ethnological inference is confirmed by tradition; the Rajpoots were the Aryan invaders who drove the wild tribes into inaccessible fastnesses.

Bheels are divided into three classes—village, cultivating, and wild. The first class consists of families who have settled in villages near the mountains, and belong to the village community and its service in the capacity of watchmen. They have a portion of village land assigned to them, and certain dues in grain from the harvest. They preserve few of the characteristics of their wild brethren. The second have either voluntarily, or perforce, adopted cultivation as a means of subsistence, and have settled in hamlets. Thus they possess a partial civilization, but are by no means reformed, being addicted to robbery and to excessive indulgence in spirituous liquors. The mountain Bheels retain their original condition of savage freedom. They subsist by the chase, live on wild roots, fruits, and the sale of forest produce, and by plunder. They are, however, a wretched looking, diminutive race, and the poverty of their food, the precarious, unsheltered condition of their lives, forbid their improvement in their present condition. Yet they are hardy and active, and capable of enduring great fatigue. The bow is their chief, and indeed their almost only weapon, and they are very skilful in its use. It is strong, and requires a powerful arm; it is made of bamboo, and about five feet long, the string being either bamboo or made of sinews of wild

BHEELS OF THE VINDHYAN RANGE.

animals, especially of deer. A few have swords and daggers, but in warfare or in the chase, they rely only on the bow.

Their usages in regard to marriage are curious, and different in many respects from all other tribes. They will not marry women of their own tribe, nor of that of mother's brother, nor of their mother's mother. Yet polygamy is a rule, and men with four and five wives are common. The women are prolific, but few children in comparison, survive the life of hardship to which they are exposed, and the malaria of the jungles is fatal to many. Nor is the adult population exempt from its influence, and fevers, dysentery, and diseases of the spleen, are common and fatal. The Bheels allege that but for the use of ardent spirits in large quantities they could not exist in the jungles, and the habit of drinking leads to terrible excesses among them.

The Bheel women have much influence over the men, but never accompany them in their expeditions. It is said that Bheels never spare their prisoners except by the intercession of their women. They have little opportunity of exhibiting dress, as what they have is scanty and poor in the last degree; but they are fond of ornaments, and wear rings of brass from the ankles to the knees, the upper ring having a circle of small bells attached to it, with heavy silver rings on their toes. These ornaments being hereditary possessions, descend in families as it were heirlooms. *Vide* following article, No. 364.



BHEELS VINDHYAN RANGE.

ABORIGINAL TRIBE.

MUNDLAISUR.

363.

BHEELS OF THE SATPOORA RANGE.

(364)

THE Satpoora range is divided from the Vindhyan by the river Nerbudda, and is broken also by the river Taptee, which rises on the table land to the eastward of the range, which descends by abrupt declivities and precipices of basalt into Berar, attaining in many places an elevation of about 4,000 feet above the level of the sea. Among this range the hills are much broken, and the dense forests and ravines afford ample shelter for the Bheels, who do not differ in habits and characteristics from those of the Vindhyan range. We therefore follow Lieut. Waterhouse's report, in illustration of his Photographs. The group No. 363 are of wild Bheels from Nimawur, Khandesh, and other parts of the wildest forest country, who were in prison at Mundhlaier for an attack upon a police post; and this accounts for their being decently clothed, and having a more civilized appearance than they would have had in their wild state. Two of them are naiks or leaders, and all have Hindoo names, or names approaching Hindoo, such as Jo Ram Naik, Kumaon Naik, Rutna, Tantra, &c.

Bheels do not affect much clothing in their natural condition, a rag round the head, and another fastened to a string round the waist, which passes between the legs, and is tucked into the string behind, being all that is needed. The Bheel has, however, some decent clothing in which he attends fairs, markets, or festivals at certain temples, where he makes annual sacrifices; and the women in this respect are the same as the men. However well he may be dressed, there is no mistaking the peculiar physiognomy of a Bheel—the broad face, with small restless eyes, high cheek bones, flat noses, and large mouths, vary little throughout; and but for a frequently pleasant, merry expression, would be absolutely repulsive.

Wild Bheels have no settled habitations, and move their huts from place to place, as they are influenced by need or fancy. Having cleared a spot in the forest, they construct huts of posts driven into the ground, the walls of which are coarse bamboo mats plastered with mud, and the roof thatched with grass. The floor is then beaten down with clay, and earth is thrown up all round the bottom

of the wall, as well to keep out the wind, as to form a channel of drainage when rain falls. Huts are not clustered together, but each family settles on its own reclaimed spot, and moves when the soil is exhausted, or sickness appears, or, as is often supposed, the place is haunted by spirits and demons, and children and cattle die. Where wild animals abound, the Bheel builds a sleeping stage for his family, raised about nine feet from the ground. Over this is a rough thatch, and the floor is of bamboos neatly put together. In this the Bheel, with all his family, sleeps at night, whatever valuables he possesses being removed to it.

The Bheel who cultivates, and, more or less, all do so, raises grain of a coarse description, millets, kooki, and the like, which are easily grown; also a few gourds and pumpkins, and vegetables, which, with the meat gained by the chase, form his rudely dressed food. But he generally disposes of his grain to the Bunnea of the nearest village, where also he and his wives carry firewood, grass, honey, gums, jungle fruits for preserves and pickles, and in the spring season, the young tender shoots of the bamboo. These articles are exchanged for cash, or for cloths and implements, or bartered for liquor, which is ever an especial need, a few spices and other condiments, as salt and the like. Many of them understand the art of distillation, and make spirits from the sweet capsules of the mohwah flower, which are not unlike coarse dried raisins, and the tree grows abundantly in all localities frequented by them. They also collect the mohwah flowers as they fall, and sell them to the distillers. While meat of all kinds, cattle, deer, goats, pigs, fowls, hares, and even wild rats and birds are eaten by the Bheels, they will not touch the flesh of animals who have died from disease, or carrion eating animals, such as tigers, leopards, and hyenas; they do not object to the flesh of cows or buffaloes, and in this respect differ from other wild tribes professing Hindooism, in however lax a degree.

The religion of the Bheels is absolute fetishism. They reverence Bobadeo, or Mahadeo, from whom they believe they are descended, and hold certain groves or parts of their forests sacred to him, in which no tree is allowed to be cut except under a propitiatory sacrifice of a goat. In these groves and in other places, sacrifices to local deities under various names, to Devi, or Bhowanee, when small-pox is prevalent, are frequently made, and attended by members of the tribe. They also frequent festivals at certain Hindoo temples of sanctity, in common with others, and make offerings to Brahmins. They are firm believers in witchcraft exercised by women, and when suspected of this practice, which is proved by a kind of ordeal which must be submitted to, women are not unfrequently put to death. It is probable that instances of such proceedings were by no means rare in former times; but the more effectual supervision of the police conservatory of forests, and the like, have exposed even the boldest of the Bheels to continual observation, and crime among them is now materially checked. Blood feuds are,

however, common, and cannot be terminated without a general assembly of the tribe and a feast, paid by the fines levied. Thus the price of a man's life may be fixed at about 120 rupees, paid in money, produce, or cattle; of a woman, 60 rupees; and wounds are paid for according to their severity. In most cases the assembly expends most part of the fine in spirits, and the riot of intoxication continues for several days.

The chief crimes of the Bheels are dacoity and cattle lifting. The former has been much suppressed, but the latter is still considered an honourable exploit, and is carried out with great boldness and dexterity, usually from a great distance. A certain locality is watched, and a herd of cattle and its herdsman surrounded; the latter are tied to trees, and the herd hurried on by day and by night through the most unfrequented paths, to a secure place where the booty is divided. Pursuit is vain among the deep forests, and were it undertaken, it must be a bold party to attack Bheels in their strongholds and secluded ravines. Small crimes, such as petty thefts, are almost unknown, and if any occur, they are settled by the Tarwee, or head of the tribe, by fines.

The Tarwees are the chiefs of each tribe of Bheels, or section of a tribe. The office is hereditary, and held in great respect; indeed, the Tarwee is almost absolute, and a council of Tarwees, the highest court of arbitration or appeal. They hold the power of life and death, and their decision cannot be disturbed or reversed. Among the village Bheels the Tarwee has charge of the police arrangements; if cattle are lifted he tracks them, and the facility of tracking exhibited by a Bheel is wonderful. Where no mark can be seen by the uninitiated, the Bheel is infallible as to the spoor of a tiger, a stag, or cattle, and he rarely fails. He also watches the crops when ripening, drives away wild animals, prevents encroachments on village boundaries, and performs many useful offices as guide, messenger, and the like, for which the Tarwee is paid by a proportion out of the harvest of all fields and gardens, which he shares among his people. On the succession of any of the Rajpoot chiefs, it is considered essential that the head Bheel Tarwee should make a mark with his blood on the forehead of the chief, and without this ceremony his succession is considered incomplete.

The Bheels came under British rule after the final annexation of the Peshwah's dominions in 1818. Previous to that, from the earliest ages, they had been unconquered, free, and powerful. No one interfered with them, and no one checked them; and though occasionally parties of them were hunted down by the Rajpoots or Mussulmans, no material effect was produced. The Mussulmans never attempted to convert them. In Mussulman invasions from the north, way through the forests was purchased by donations, and by grants of *russoom* or black mail to heads of tribes. Merchants purchased exemption from plunder and robbery, and the employment of Bheels as village police was the only safeguard

BHEELS OF THE SATPOORA RANGE.

possessed by the people at large; and it is very possible that the wild Bheels were much more numerous then than now. In 1824, 1825, and 1826, Khandesh was much disturbed by them, and they were not only depredators in and about the Vindhya and Satpooras, but in the hills which lie between Aurungabad and Khandesh. Regular forces were sent against them, but with no effect; and the Bheels turned the efforts of the sepoy into ridicule by robbing camps at night, cutting off stragglers, plundering baggage, cattle, and the like, with persistence. They seemed ubiquitous, yet were never seen. Attempts were then made to settle them on waste lands which they selected themselves, but this too had a sorry result. They killed and ate the bullocks, goats, and cows given to them; they sold the grain given for seed for liquor, and eventually broke away in defiance. It was then that James Outram, Adjutant of the 23rd Bombay Native Infantry, conceived the project of raising men among them, to form a disciplined police. He knew many of the naiks or leaders, from his constant hunting tours, and he set to work steadily and effectively. He went among them alone, gained their confidence and affection, and, in process of time—a few months—succeeded in forming, with a few men of his own corps, the nucleus of a company. He feasted them, gave them liquor in abundance, was witness to their savage debauchery into which they often relapsed; but their savagery could not withstand the admirable perseverance of the young leader they now followed, and the wildest Bheels became regular soldiers, were drilled and disciplined, and led to the apprehension of their own brethren when the public peace was disturbed. Outram's Bheels grew famous; and he himself became so noble, so distinguished, that any one who ever knew him now rejoices that he had had that privilege. The example of the Khandesh Bheel corps was followed in other places, and thus it happens that the Bheels' control is effected by themselves.

We are not aware that the Bheels have any distinct language of their own; what they speak is a mixture of Mahratta, Hindce, Hindoostanee, and Guzerattee, derived from the provinces in which they reside. No doubt, investigation of original words, of which there are traces, would lead to the allotment to them of their real place in aboriginal tribal classes of India—perhaps the Tamulian.



BHEELS SATPOORA RANGE.

ABORIGINAL TRIBE.

SAUGOR.

BHEELS OF JHABOOA.

(365)

THE male figure represented is Nar Sing, a private in the Malwah Bheel corps. He has been drilled, and has lost his original wild appearance. The Bheels of Jhabooa are, however, of an industrious class, cultivating the ground, selling grass, firewood, and jungle produce, and thus earning a decent livelihood. Nar Sing is five feet eleven inches in height, unusually tall for a Bheel, and his features are more regular than those of Bheels in general.

His wife, Chundi, is five feet in height; she is twenty years old, and is well dressed for her station; she wears a sari, printed blue and white, with an ornamented bodice, a dark blue petticoat of strong cotton cloth, with a scarlet border of a double stripe. Her legs, from the knees down to the feet, are encased in rings of brass, to the upper one of which, as noticed in the preceding article, is fastened a string of bells, which tinkle as she walks, and she carries her child in a fold of her sari. Her husband holds his bow in his hand, which appears to be about four and-a-half feet long, and his arrows are in his left hand.



BHEELS OF JHABOOA.

CENTRAL INDIA.

365.

BRINJARIES.

(366)

THE peculiar tribe of Brinjaries has already been noticed at article 161, *ante* ; but the excellent Photograph of Lieut. Waterhouse cannot be passed by, as the figures are so essentially characteristic and excellent. The man wears a red and white turban, a white tunic and dhoty, and a red scarf over his shoulders. He is sitting on his feet closed together, a posture peculiar to Brinjaries, leaning on his spear shaft, and his hookah stands by him ; his sword is across his knees. He is five feet six inches in height, and thirty years old. The woman is Rattan, five feet two inches in height, and fifty years old, whose dress is thus detailed :—red printed sari, red petticoat, and blue waistband ; she wears a great many ornaments, a gold or gilt ring through the nose, massive silver ear ornaments, silver and gold chains and neck ornaments, silver bracelets and anklets, and the high comb peculiar to the Brinjari women.

Wherever they are met with all over India, the Brinjaries are the same ; neither they, nor their costumes or occupation, alter in the least. From Sind to Assam, from the foot of the Himalayas to Cape Comorin, they are the regular, and, for the most part, the principal—often the only, public carriers in the country. To the districts of Central India they bring from the sea coast, salt, spices, and condiments : and take back, or to other places, grain, oil seeds, hemp, and whatever they may find, either as a profitable speculation of their own, or provided by their agents and correspondents. All India is not covered with railways yet, nor likely to be for several generations to come. Metalled roads do not traverse all localities, but the Brinjari drivers can penetrate everywhere at the proper seasons, and remove all there may be to export.

It is an interesting sight to meet a drove of Brinjari bullocks on the march. Before all stalks the patriarch of the drove, bearing the common standard,—a huge beast,—whose horns and forehead, dewlap and shoulders, are ornamented with long bunches of hair, tied up fancifully with scarlet or blue cloth, embroidered with coloured cotton patterns and cowrie shells ; a fine bell hangs at his neck, whose

BRINJARIES.

sound is heard above all others, and a smaller set of bells, which tinkle as he steps along. The great leader is never in a hurry, for he knows that the herd following ought not to straggle, and must do so if his own pace is too rapid; he therefore steps on slowly and majestically, surrounded by other leaders, all handsomely decorated, but none so profusely as himself. The chief of the tandah, or company, steps by him at the same easy pace, for the march is never a long one, rarely exceeding eight or ten miles. Every company has its leading bullock, and every separate company has its separate leader and smaller standard, and the whole, even the smallest bullock, has a sonorous or tinkling bell round its neck. The chorus of bells is therefore strange to hear, but not unmusical; it has even a solemn effect in its monotony, and varies in effect, especially where the road is hilly or broken, like the bells of the shepherds. Some of the bells are cast, and musical, others are made of copper plates, and some even of wood. By this procession of cattle great and small, sometimes amounting to thousands, and rarely less than hundreds, march the men and women, the latter always in groups, most remarkable for the variety in rich colour of all their costumes, both saris and petticoats, the latter being generally tucked up, revealing very shapely limbs and perfect feet, and the softer tinkling of their brass or silver anklets and small bells, mingle with the deeper chime of those of the cattle. Many of them carry children on their hips or astride on one shoulder, the boys and girls who can walk the stage, help to drive the cattle, others are seated upon backs of oxen between bags of corn, and the whole convoy is escorted by a tribe of powerful dogs, who prevent the cattle from straying, and watch the camp at night.

Arrived at the stage, generally some open piece of uncultivated ground, the various heads of droves file into their proper positions, the loads and pack saddles are all removed, and properly piled up in ranks, the cattle are driven to water, and afterwards into the grazing grounds, which, if they belong to a village, the leader of the company pays for according to number. The women begin to cook, and by evening all work is finished, the cattle tied up to their pegs, and the men assemble round the watch fire, where they smoke and sing, or the women dance, till the night is well advanced. A free untrammelled life, which for centuries has passed over this peculiar people without change. It is strange that no good pictures have been painted of them, for there is no brighter or more varied costume existing, and the grace and frequently the beauty of the women is beyond question.

But there are dark blots here and there in the lives of the Brinjaries. They are more than accused of habitual infanticide of female children, of secret murders, and of dacoity. Whether the Lambancees, who, to all appearance are the same as the Brinjaries, are identically the same, cannot be determined. It has been proved again and again that Lambancees are among the most desperate of dacoits,

BRINJARIES.

worshipping the sacred axe, and rivalling, if not exceeding, the Sanseas, Meenas, Mooltanees, or others, in the commission of crime; but we are not aware that dacoity has been proved against companies of trading Brinjaries, who in all relations of their class with merchants, are so scrupulously honest. All that can be said is, that the mode of life of the Brinjaries, their isolation from other sects, and their constant change of location, renders it impossible to watch them with sufficient minuteness to gain any perfect knowledge of their peculiar and almost mysterious lives; and of their religious belief there is similar ignorance. They profess to be Hindoos, and worship some of the Hindoo deities; they also admit the ministrations of Brahmins at marriages, and on some other occasions; but their principal observances are connected with fetish worship, by sacrifices. Their own caste assemblies try cases of dispute and breaches of purity, and general punchayets settle cases of debts, family disputes, and the like. Any recourse to regular tribunals is unknown, and would be inconsistent with the habits of the race.

What their origin has been no one has yet determined. By most, however, they are considered a low tribe of Rajpoots, and their clans have Rajpoot appellations, as Puar, Rahtore, Jabore, &c.; but the Rajpoots do not acknowledge them in any degree. Their language is a mixture of Guzerattee and Hindce, with some traces of a more ancient dialect, possibly Pracrit; but the men usually speak a dialect of Hindoostanee, which carries them all over India. Their diet is vegetarian for the most part, but they enjoy deer or wild hog when they can get it; and are very bold and expert in the chase.



BRINJARIES.

HINDOOS

CENTRAL INDIA.

368.

MALWI BUNNEAS.

(367)

THE group does not represent natives of Malwah; the men are all from Shekhawattee, Jeypoor, and Marwar; in fact, the Marwarrees have been already illustrated and described at article 201, *ante*. There is nothing new to say of them in Malwah; they are the same in character, in life, in occupation, in speculation, and it may be added, in extortionate transactions all over Malwah and Central India, as they are in the Deccan or wherever else they are met with. In Malwah they have opium to deal in, and can speculate as they please with Bombay, and make time bargains, their favourite mode of dealing. They make advances to village cultivators for the growth of poppy fields, and take the opium according to agreement, which is but too often extortionate. Every one complains of them, official reports are full of their hard practices with the people; and yet, where there are no local banks or banking operations, the people would perhaps do worse without the Marwarrees, and they have undoubtedly been more instrumental in circulating capital throughout almost the whole of India than any other merchants, and to classes of the people whom it would not have reached but for their speculative agencies. Marwarrees, though they can write and keep accounts, are very indifferently educated, and their own character, apparently a cross between Hindee and Guzerattee, is most difficult to read; and many amusing tales and jokes are current in India of parties of Marwarrees, sitting down together to decipher letters on business, or received from their homes. In religious and caste observances they are very strict, professing for the most part the Vishnuvite worship of Krishna united to the Jain. Many of them attain great eminence as bankers and merchants, and probably the greater part of the bill transactions, as well as the trade and speculations in opium, cotton, and grain, of India, are in their hands, or carried on through their direct agency.



MALWI BUNNEAS.

HINDOOS.

CENTRAL INDIA.

337.

MUSSULMANS OF JOWRAH.

(368)

THE figures represented are a havaldar of the Cucherry of the Nawab of Jowrah, the centre figure, and four orderlies, attendants upon the Nawab, when in cucherry. Almost all the Mussulmans of Jowrah belong to the military class, and for the most part are Pathans, who originally came from Rampoor with Ghuffoor Khan, the father of the present Nawab. They are usually called Deswanees, and have no particular distinction from other Mussulmans of the country.



MUSSULMANS OF JOWRAH.

PATHANS.

CENTRAL INDIA.

368.

MUSSULMANS OF BHOPAL.

(369)

THE gentlemen who form the magnificent group represented by Lieut. Waterhouse, are officers in the service of Her Highness the Begum of Bhopal, G.C.S.I ; and their dresses are worthy of description, according to the official catalogue. In the centre sits Bukshi Moroowut Mahomed Khan, who, as his title expresses, is general paymaster of the forces. He wears a purple turban with a jewelled ornament, a coat of cloth of gold (kumkhab), and a red silk waistband. On his right is Hafiz Mahomed Hussein Khan, Naib Bukshi, who is deputy paymaster, dressed in a richly embroidered green coat, red turban, silk trousers, and socks. On his right is Syed Oomrao Ali Risaldar, a commander of cavalry, whose dress is the same as the preceding, with the addition of a cross belt. On the proper left of the centre figure is Mahomed Ali Khan, and on his left Meer Wahid Ali Risaldar, whose dresses, evidently uniform, are alike, green cloth coats, richly embroidered with gold. They are the principal officers of Her Highness the Begum's forces, and necessarily occupy distinguished positions at her court. One of them, on the proper left of the centre figure, wears a medal, which appears to be English, but it is not mentioned in the official list. The whole are fine specimens of Bhopal Mussulmans, being all of them five feet eleven inches in height, and evidently very powerful men. It may be presumed that they do not differ from Mussulmans elsewhere: two of them are Syuds, and three Pathans.



MUSSULMANS OF BHOPAL.

PATHANS.

CENTRAL INDIA.

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BHORAHs.

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IT is unusual in India to find any part of its Mussulman population devoted to trade. They are usually soldiers, cultivators, or landholders, with a few classes of artisans, as weavers, gold thread makers, embroiderers, and the like; but the Bhorahs are an exclusively trading and mercantile class. They are never soldiers, cultivators, or artisans, but traders only; and, it must be confessed, are remarkably industrious and persevering: extremely orderly, peaceful, and enterprising. The Official Report on them by Lieut. Waterhouse, R.A., is so full and correct in general terms, that we have much pleasure in quoting part of it.

"The Bhorahs are a peculiar tribe of Mahomedans. Their original country was Arabia Felix, thence they emigrated to Surat, and settled in Guzerat. Thence they have spread over Western India and Malwah, where they may be found in any of the principalities, the chief colony of them being at Oojein, where there are about 2,000 families. In their religious opinions they approach nearest the Sheeahs, and they are believed to be a remnant of the old sect of Hussunee, once so dreaded in Egypt and Persia for those acts of murder and desperation, which they perpetrated, in blind obedience to their spiritual lord, known in history as 'the old man of the mountain.' They have nothing, however, at the present time, of the sanguinary and warlike temper which distinguished the followers of 'the old man of the mountain.' They are in general very peaceable and orderly merchants and tradesmen, and have considerable influence and privileges in most of the cities of Central India, agreeing far better with Jains and Rajpoots than the other more warlike Mahomedans. They engage in all sorts of trade, and have done much towards introducing European articles of luxury, &c., into the houses of the wealthier classes of natives. They are a very persevering and industrious class of people, and are very wealthy. Bhorahs are generally unpopular, and are held in the same popular estimation for parsimony that Jews are in England. The peculiar characteristic of their tribe is sobriety. They never drink intoxicating liquors, nor do they smoke; moreover, they will not sell spirituous liquors nor

intoxicating drugs; and on this account some persons have considered them to be descendants of the Rechabites. They are treated as a society, and in this respect also they resemble the Jews. The society also subscribes to assist any who have been unfortunate in business, or are in other distress.

"The tribe is under the jurisdiction of their chief moollah, who lives at Surat. He appoints agents or moollahs to each town in which Bhorahs are settled, who are changed every two years. They are supported by dues from each family, according to their means, the amount of which is settled by the chief moollah, who is in turn supported by a collection from each town, the amount being periodically remitted by the town moollahs.

"Bhorahs may easily be recognized by their peculiar dress and general appearance. Their dress consists of a small round turban, white, or of chintz printed muslin of peculiar patterns; a peculiar coat, with very short waist and long skirt, called jamah; and almost invariably paejamas, or drawers, of white, blue, or red chintz, or gingham, cut after a fashion of their own. They are in general a handsome race of men, with a grave and cunning cast of countenance. The colour of their beards and mustachios is black, and they never shave the chin, though the head is always closely shaved. Their complexions vary from dark brown to wheat colour, and their height may be from five feet six inches to five feet nine inches. Their houses are clean and well furnished, and they have stalls or shops in most of the principal streets, where they deal in perfumes, drugs, hardware, English cloths of all kinds, crockery, and English goods in general. Many of them make and sell tin articles, pots, vessels, cullenders, and the like. Their women also are industrious as embroiderers, makers of silk and cotton strings for drawers, tape, &c. Their food is not different from that of other Mussulmans."

Bhorahs are strict in their religious exercises. They pray at the prescribed periods of the day, and attend the mosque services at the usual hours morning and evening. They also observe the Ramazan fast, but do not join the popular observances of the Mohorum. They are very bigoted in belief, and despise other Mussulman sects, while they in turn are held to be heterodox in the highest degree. Whether they have any peculiar ceremonies and creed does not appear to be well known; but they are at least free from the Hindoo superstitions which largely enter into the belief of other Mussulmans of India. Strong Jewish features prevail among them, and they have no resemblance to Arabs or Persians in general. On these grounds it has been argued that they are Jews by origin, who became Mussulmans of a peculiar sect, preserving their own habits and exclusiveness. Although Bhorahs will not sell ordinary spirits, yet they have no objection to sell liquors in bottles, and even wines and brandy, as portions of English or European products, and thus have introduced their consumption into the country at large.

BHORAHs.

Bhorahs have settled in Bombay in great numbers, where they keep shops of all kinds; and there is hardly a cantonment in Western India where they do not sell European manufactures. Many of them earn their livelihood by carrying about boxes filled with every conceivable article of general use, from muslins and linens for English ladies, to hardware, saddlery, and the like. Their characters are well known in Bombay as well as in its out-stations. Bhorahs not infrequently speak English fluently, but they use it only colloquially. Their ordinary languages are Guzerattee and Hindoostanee, though some of them speak Persian and Arabic. For their written language and accounts they use Guzerattee only. Bhorahs marry exclusively in their own sects, and their women are most jealously guarded. Their marriage ceremonies are simple, and strictly according to Mussulman law.



BHORAHS.

MUSSULMAN TRADERS.

INDORE.

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MAHRATTAS.

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THOUGH Mahrattas do not belong to the ordinary population of Malwah, there are many still in the country, descendants of the soldiers who, under Sindia, Holkar, the Puars and Bhoslays, wrested Central India from the Mussulmans, and eventually subverted the empire of Delhi, and carried their victorious arms into all parts of India, forming in several localities independent monarchies and principalities, of which Sindia, Holkar, Puar of Dhar, the Gaekwar, and the state of Travancore in the south of India, are the present representatives.

It is scarcely necessary to do more than allude in general terms to the progress of the Mahrattas from cultivators and shepherds, to the eminence they attained in Indian history. Early in the year 1657 Sivajee, whom all Mahrattas honour as an incarnation of divinity, the lord of a small mountain tract in the Syhadree western chain of Ghauts, formed a league against the Mussulman King of Beejapoor; and, after a series of forays and attacks upon the King's possessions and forts, succeeded in establishing himself in Purtab Gurh, one of the chain of mountain fortresses, and thence carried on his depredations with singular success and energy. In that year he drew into an ambuscade the army of Beejapoor under Afzool Khan, which had been sent to reduce him: murdered him at a conference, and destroyed the whole of his army. He then proclaimed the nationality of the Mahrattas, and put himself at its head, carrying war by means of predatory expeditions, not only into adjacent provinces, but to the south, while his active commanders attacked Malwah, and Guzerat, with Berar, and wrested them from the empire of Delhi.

His descendants carried on a successful war for many years with the Emperor Aurungzeeb; and thus the Mahrattas became a power in India which was for the time irresistible, till the English rose after the battle of Plassey, and in their turn the Mahrattas were defeated and checked: and by the deposition of their last Peshwah, Bajee Rao, the kingdom ceased to exist, and its provinces fell under British rule. In less than one hundred years the Mahratta power had reached its

MAHRATTAS.

zenith, and the various transactions, political and military, from 1757 to 1818 reduced them to the condition in which they now exist. It was impossible that the predatory hordes which ravaged the whole of India almost every year on pretence of collecting national demands, should stand before the disciplined troops of England and the science of English commanders; and though both Sindia, Holkar, and the Peshwah, the two former in particular, organized powerful native armies, trained and disciplined by French and other officers, yet in the battles which ensued in the two Mahratta wars, they were successively beaten by the English commanders, their guns taken, and their prestige destroyed. Before the rise of the British power, however, the Mahrattas had weakened their national existence by disagreements and destructive wars between themselves; Sindia and Holkar were bitter enemies, and fought frequent battles with each other with varied success, and the Peshwah joined one or other as policy seemed to dictate; but the first attempted league against the British was frustrated by dissension, and the second in 1817-18 failed altogether from the same causes of internal strife and disunion, and the shattered portions can never unite again for any offensive movement. The hereditary soldiers of the Deccan are now peaceful, skilful farmers and landholders; they have covered their formerly barren rough country with excellent cultivation and thriving villages, and are prosperous beyond any point of their previous history.

In Malwah and Central India they have not settled down to be farmers or landholders, or to mingle with local races. The comparatively few there are, are servants of Holkar, Sindia, or Puar of Dhar, and are employed in their small forces, or police. Mahrattas do not even marry in Central India, but go to the Deccan to their own several localities to choose their wives, whom in some instances they take with them—in others, allowing them to remain, and visiting them when they can get leave. At home they have places in the general community, they are hereditary landholders or hold hereditary appointments, or offices; but while absent they are literally strangers and pilgrims in a foreign land, with no local ties to it but the service which affords them means of subsistence.

Mahrattas are for the most part Sudras of the fourth Hindoo class, though some affect to have had a Rajpoot descent, and claim to be Kshuttrics. They acknowledge the priestly rule of Brahmins, and perform all prescribed ceremonies of that faith; but there are particular local divinities held to be incarnations, for which they have peculiar reverence, and to whose temples thousands resort on annual pilgrimages. Some Mahrattas are devotees of Vishnu as Krishna, some of Mahadeo, or Siva, as Khundoba. The goddess Devi is also worshipped as well from fear as from love. But besides the, as they may be termed, orthodox divinities, their ancient fetichism is evident in sacrifices to other spirits and demons,

who are called gram deotas, village sprites, which are represented by piles of stones bedaubed with red lead, and by sacred spots on high rocks and rugged mountain tops, in secluded caves and ravines, and by the waterfalls and rivers of their wild native land. Ordinarily in his farm and in his home, the Mahratta is a faithful, kind husband, a good practical farmer, and kind to his children and dependants, if he have any; but he is passionate and easily excited, perhaps to violence. He is accustomed to the use of arms, and in every village of this country a gymnasium is maintained, where youths are trained to manly exercises. He is also of a wily, uncertain disposition, with no abstract love of truth, intriguing after a clumsy fashion, for his mind is simple enough. He is patient, hardy, and brave, devoted to his leader or to his friend, and with much national spirit. It may therefore be imagined how in the old times such a people were excited by superstition, national honour, and love of plunder, and, banded together as they were by a national tie, became the scourge of India; for, as a race, they were cruel, vindictive, and rapacious in the highest degree.

Mahrattas have great pride in family surnames, and there are none which do not belong to some one of the numerous families. The names are not tribal, or caste distinctions, but literally family surnames like our own. Thus we have Sindia, Holkar, Gackwar, Puar, Bhoslay, Durpay, Dainglay, and the like, with hosts of others as varied as our own. Some families are esteemed of a higher rank than others, and there is hardly any point on which a true Mahratta is more tetchy than family pride.

As a rule Mahrattas are not good looking, whether male or female, and they are usually short, stout, active figures, capable of great exertion, particularly on horseback, and they are excellent riders. The women in some instances are pretty when young; but though they preserve their figures to a late age, their faces, from exposure to field work, grow plain and seamed, as it were, by the heat. Only Mahrattas of high rank seclude their women, and that very partially. They go abroad, even of the highest rank, to temples, to their gardens, or appear in the house before all that come to it, without the least reservation; and it is an honourable trait in Mahratta character, that they especially venerate their mothers, and revere their memories after their death. Mahratta women have the complete control of their households; they have a voice in all household and family concerns, and are friends as well as helpmates to their husbands and their children. The highest Mahratta ladies have taken active shares in national politics, and in many instances have distinguished themselves by wisdom and general benevolence.

In manners, Mahrattas are neither courtly, nor pliant and graceful like other natives of India; and consequently, though by no means intending rudeness, they are bluff, homely, and outspoken, knowing and practising little of the fluent flattery so offensive in others; but they are kindly withal, and most hospitable

MAHRATTAS.

where well known: generous too, always to the best of their means. In their food Mahrattas who have taken the bhugat, or vow of abstinence, do not eat flesh of any kind, or even fish, and observe a strictly vegetarian diet; but the ordinary Mahratta eats fish, flesh, except beef, and fowl, as he can get them, and takes spirits also, though not, except upon occasions, to excess. Ordinarily the dress, both of males and females, is studiously plain, the men wearing trousers, or drawers tight below the knee, where they end, and loose above, and an ordinary calico tunic or jacket; the women a simple sari; but both sexes are fond of fine clothes, and at weddings and ceremonies fine clothes and rich ornaments are as profusely displayed as the owners can afford. In every respect we think that the Mahrattas evince more character than any other people of India, except perhaps the Rajpoots; and are at present some of the most useful and loyal subjects of the crown.



MAHRATTAS

HINDOOS.

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SHEKHAWATTEE BUNNEAS.

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THESE also may be classed under the term Marwarrees. They are the same class exactly as those described before under that head; respectable merchants, bankers, and general dealers, flourishing in Holkar's busy capital of Indore. Their native province, Shekhawattee, is a portion of Rajpootana. From the caste mark on their foreheads, the persons represented appear to be of the Vishnuvite sect of Hindoos.



SHEKHAWATTEE BUNNEAS.

HINDOOS.

INDORE

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BRAHMINS OF OOMKAR, MUNDHATA.

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THESE Brahmins belong to the Smarth, a Sivaic sect, and in nowise differ from others previously described. They are some of the priests who officiate at the celebrated temples of Mundhata, in the Nimaur province, to which pilgrims resort from all parts of India. Grant's *Gazetteer*, article "Mundhata," p. 257, gives an excellent descriptive article on the subject by Capt. J. Forsyth, Deputy Commissioner, which is too long for quotation, but we extract a few striking passages. Mundhata is an island in the Narbada (Nerbudda) river, and contains numerous temples, ancient and modern, including the great shrine of Oomkar, a form of Siva.

"The island covers an area of five-sixths of a square mile. Towards the northern branch of the river, the slope is not very abrupt in some places; but its southern and eastern faces terminate in bluff precipices, 400 or 500 feet in height. It is cleft in two by a deep ravine running nearly north and south, the eastern end containing about one-third of the whole area. The southern bank of the Narbada, opposite Mundhata, called Godar Para, is as precipitous as Mundhata, and between them the river forms a deep silent pool, full of alligators and large fish, many of which are so tame that they take grain off the steps. The rocks on both sides of the river are of a greenish hue, very boldly stratified, and said to be hornstone slate.

"The island is said, in the *Narmada Khund* (professing to be a portion of the *Skanda Paran*) to have been originally called Baidurya Mani Purwat, which was changed to Mundhata, as a boon granted by Oomkar to the Rajah Mundhata, seventeenth of the solar race, who had here performed a great sacrifice to the god. Be this as it may, there is no doubt that the worship of Siva was established here at an early age. On Mundhata, the shrine of Oomkar, and on the southern bank, that of Amareshwar (lord of the immortals), are two of the twelve great 'Singhs,' which existed in India when Mahoméd of Ghuzni demolished the temple of Somnath in A.D. 1024.

"The Rajah of Mundhata, who is hereditary custodian of all the modern temples, is a Bhilala, claiming descent from a Chohan Rajpoot, named Bharat Singh, who is stated in the family genealogy to have taken Mundhata from a Bhil chief in the year A.D. 1068. The genealogy gives twenty-eight generations to the family since then, and twenty-five years to each generation. The same genealogy affirms that at that time a Gosain named Duryao Nath was the only worshipper of Oomkar on the island, which could not be visited by pilgrims for fear of a terrible god called Kal Bhairawa, and his consort Kali Devi, who regularly fed upon human flesh. Duryao Nath, however, by his austerities, shut up the latter in a subterranean cave, the mouth of which may still be seen, appeasing her by erecting an image outside to receive worship, and arranged with Kal Bhairawa that for the future he should receive human sacrifices at regular intervals; and accordingly devotees were induced to precipitate themselves over the Birkhala rocks, at the eastern end of the island, on to the rocks by the river's brink, where the terrible deity resided—a practice which continued till 1824, in which year the British officer in charge of Nimaur witnessed the last offering of the sort made to Kal Bhairawa. It is not difficult to trace in this fragmentary story the revival of the worship of Siva, which took place about the tenth or eleventh century, and its gradual propagation by adventurous missionaries, adopting as it went the Kalis and Bhairawas of the savage tribes as mythological consorts and sons of Siva, just as its Rajpoot protectors allied themselves with the daughters of the wild hill chiefs who worshipped these bloodthirsty demons.

"The old temples about Mundhata all suffered greatly from the bigotry of the Mahomedans, who ruled the country from about A.D. 1400. Every old dome is overthrown, and not a single figure of a god or animal is found to be unmutilated. Doubtless the work was continued by the Ghori princes of Malwah, and completed by that arch iconoclast, Aurungzeeb; yet much remains among the ruins, which must be highly interesting to the archaeologist. The walls of the different parts, two of which enclose the two sections of the island itself; and two more, the rocky eminence on the southern banks, display some excellent specimens of Hindoo architecture. They are formed of very large blocks of stone without cement. The stone is partly the basalt of the hill itself, and partly a coarse yellow sandstone, which must have been brought from a considerable distance. The gateways are formed with horizontal arches, and ornamented with much fine carving, statues of gods, &c."

Mr. Forsyth gives an elaborate description, for which we have not space, of one of the temples, which, though now much destroyed, must have been a noble specimen of Hindoo architecture. "It is not unreasonable to conclude," he writes, "that it was just being finished in A.D. 1295, when Sultan Ala-ad-deen interrupted the works, demolishing even the elephants which were still standing in

BRAHMINS OF OOMKAR, MUNDHATA.

the workshop. Most of them had, however, been fixed in their places, and the superstructure was probably complete. If so, this temple must have been inferior as a work of art to no structural Hindoo temple of that period, of which illustrations or descriptions have been given to the public; besides which, it appears to have been on a plan unusual in any known school of Hindoo architecture—at least Fergusson gives no notice of four open pillared porches in a Hindoo temple.” At the north bank of the so-called Kavire, opposite Mundhata, is a series of deserted temples, evidently of considerable antiquity. Mundhata itself seems to have been a perfect stronghold of Sivaism, no temple having ever been erected, save to the destroyer or his associate deities.

There are many Jain temples also, which appear to be ruins of very fine edifices, covered with carvings. No doubt many photographs have been taken and sketches made of these ancient remains, and they appear to be as grand as their situation is in the highest degree picturesque; and we consider it behoves Government, in its present archaeological survey, to devote a book to this celebrated and interesting spot. To the tourist or sketcher the place is readily accessible. It is not far from the foot of Asirgurh, a station of the Bombay army, and a good bridle road from the travellers' bungalow at Barhai leads directly to it, a distance of seven miles. The Mundhata Brahmins fully rely in the accomplishment of a prophecy contained in the *Bhavisy Purana*, and copied of course into the local gospel, that after 5,000 years of the Kaliyugh, the sanctity of the Ganges river will expire, and the Narbada will be left without a rival. There are now (1870) only thirty-one years left of this period, but it remains to be seen whether the Gangetic Brahmins will not discover some means of avoiding such a disastrous extinction of the profitable mahatmya of their river.



BRAHMINS OF OOMKAR.

MUNDHATA.

NIMAUR.

OOMUTS OF NURSINGHUR.

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ACCORDING to Lieut. Waterhouse's report, the Oomuts are divided into two chieftainships; one of Rajgurrh, the other of Nursinghur, in Oomutwarra, and he gives the following account of them:—

“Oomutwarra takes its name from a class of inferior Rajpoots who, some centuries ago, emigrated from Oodeypoor, and who, during the prosperity of the Mogul empire, were proprietors of large herds of camels, from which fact their name of Oomut is derived. Originally they were an inferior tribe; but subsequently on the acquisition of territory by the Oomuts, one of their chiefs, Achil Singh, Dewan of Nursinghur, after making much interest, and at considerable expense, succeeded in obtaining in marriage for his son the daughter of a near relation of the Rana of Oodeypoor, and the Oomuts were admitted to the ‘tazim’ (ceremony of obeisance) by that Prince and the Rajah of Jeypoor, at the instance of the Kychce Rajpoots of Ragoogurrh, in whose suite they attended.

“There is a tradition current regarding them that they had tamed the nilgae and stag, and that in default of horses they used them on their predatory excursions. On the decline of the Mogul empire after the death of Aurungzeeb, when petty chiefs were rising into power on every side, the Oomuts began to acquire dominion, and obtained possession of several villages in the Pergunnas of Fullain, Akbarpoor, Biawur, &c., and finally, about a century ago, under the direction of two brothers, Mohun Singh and Pureshram, possessed themselves of the whole of those districts, comprising a territory of 1,500 villages, and named the whole tract Oomutwarra.

“Mohun Singh and Pureshram assumed the titles of Rawul and Dewan, and made an equal division of their possessions, the Rawul reserving five villages in excess of his brother as a mark of his seniority. Though they were styled Rawul and Dewan, these names do not at all indicate the relative position of the two brothers, for each was ruler, and exercised distinct authority within his allotted domain. The mode of division was not less remarkable than the assignment of

OOMUTS OF NURSINGHUR.

titles, for no compact territory was possessed by either sharer in the conquest, but they established the common Mahratta custom of do-amilee, and the dominions of both were so intermixed that in some cases the two rulers exercised authority over the same village. The Rawul settled himself at Rajgurrh, and the Dewan at Puttim, near Rajgurrh; but one of his successors, Achil Singh, built the fort at Nursinghur, and removed the seat of government to that place. The successors of the Rawul became tributary to Sindia, and those of the Dewan to Holkar.

"The annual produce of Oomutwarra is estimated at eight lacs. The present revenue of Rajgurrh is about three and a half lacs, and of Nursinghur four and a half lacs. A considerable portion is bestowed in jahgeer on the relations of the Rajah, and powerful adherents and old officers of the state. Rajgurrh pays an annual tribute of Bhopal Rs. 86,000 to Sindia, and Nursinghur pays Rs. 85,000 to Holkar, under the terms of mediation effected in 1819 by the Political Agent of Bhopal."

The central figure in this group is Koonwur Mytab Singh, son of the Rajah of Nursinghur, and the others are dependents or associates. The turban of the figure on the left of the picture is tied, as will be remarked, in a strange fashion. The wearer is Oomed Singh Omud, and affects, from the style of his head dress, to be a "dandy" or fop, of the first water.



OOMUTS OF NURSINGHUR.

RAJPOOT TRIBE.

CENTRAL INDIA.

374.

CHARUN.

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AMONG the Rajpoot tribes Brahmins have comparatively little spiritual authority; Charuns and Bhats are their ordinary priests, and they keep the records and traditions of the people, and recite their valorous deeds and the exploits of their ancestors. The Charuns boast of divine origin, and are divided into two tribes, the Kachikée and Maroo; the former are merchants, the latter are bards. They must understand the rites of worship, particularly those of Siva and Parvati: they are taught to read and write, and the class who traffic, generally in camels and horses (the subject of the Photograph is a horse dealer), are shrewd men of business; while the Maroo Charuns act as minstrels. Their persons are esteemed sacred, and they are supported by the community among whom they dwell, and treated with vast respect.

Bhats and Charuns are unfailing attendants at all state or domestic ceremonies, especially at marriages and, when Suttee prevailed, at the widow's pile. On these occasions largess to the Bhats and Charuns could not be denied or evaded, and their demands and exactions, enforced under the threats of self mutilation, or suicide, often rose to such a pitch that it was impossible to comply with them. Finally a rule was made among the chiefs and the Rajpoots generally, that the fees of the Charuns and Bhats should be paid on a scale in proportion to means; and these rules extend to the whole of the people of Rajpootana, with excellent effect. Charuns marry in their own sect only, and their mode of life does not differ from other high caste Hindoos.



CHARUN.
HINDOO.
CENTRAL INDIA.

375.

BHATS.

(376)

THE Bhats, or Raos, as they were occasionally called by distinction, share power, and sometimes office, with the Charuns as chroniclers and bards. They enjoy extensive influence among the lower tribes, and assist at all ceremonials, and throughout Rajpootana are considered a sacred order. The difference between the Bhats and Charuns consists in the latter being a more courageous and warlike tribe; they usually form the guard of travellers passing through their country, and any parties or single persons under their escort are safe from robbery or molestation. The Bhats restrict themselves more entirely to the offices of chroniclers and minstrels, and protect nobody; but to kill, or beat, or in any way to offend one of them, is considered sinful and ill-omened. In dress and habits they do not differ from other inhabitants of the countries in which they live.

In Rajpootana every court of every chief, great or little—indeed, every family who can afford to maintain one, has its Bhat, or Bhats. No great person can enter a room, go out, or rise, without suitable proclamation by the Bhats present. No Rajah can go abroad without Bhats to shout forth his titles, achievements, or those of his forefathers, which is done in a very sonorous manner; while, in the expressions used, Bhats vie with each other in composing extravagant epithets, and it is not unusual for them to deliver extempore orations in verse on any remarkable occasions, when their words are chanted to wild measures, which have great effect on their hearers. It has been mentioned in the preceding description, in what manner Bhats as well as Charuns exacted money at marriages and other ceremonies; and, if possible, the Bhats were more difficult to satisfy. Some Bhats have a strong faculty of improvisation, and are much prized for it. The accomplishment is said to be hereditary, while the chronicles of families, legends, and the like, are transmitted from father to son by oral instructions. Bhats occupy the exact position of the ancient bards of Europe, exciting to war, to peace, to love, to generosity, as occasion demands, and thus form a true link in the Aryan chain.



BHAT.

HINDOO.

CENTRAL INDIA.

376.

BHEELS OF THE VINDHYAN RANGE.

(377)

THE Bheels have been noticed as far as possible in an article preceding the present, and the fine group of the tribe presented here gives, perhaps, a better illustration of the men, their arms, appearance, and equipments, than any other. Three of the group have, it will be seen, matchlocks, but the rest have bows, the ancient tribal weapon. Some of the men belong to the Malwah Bheel corps, and seem smart, well set-up, young fellows; the rest are ordinary village Bheels.

The district of Nimaur was formerly noted for the turbulence of its Bheel population, and it was to them that Outram first devoted himself. It is satisfactory to learn from the Nimaur report in Grant's *Gazetteer* that many have been reclaimed and are now ordinary settled cultivators, while the whole as a class are much improved.



BHEELS OF THE VINDHYAN RANGE.

MALWAH.

CENTRAL INDIA.

377.

RAJAH OF SEETAMHOW AND DURBAR.

(378)

THE Sectamhow family belong to the Rahtore tribe of Rajpoots. The central figure is the Rajah Maharajah Raj Singhji, whose age is between eighty and ninety; on his proper right is his son, Maharaj-ji Ruttun Singh, and next to him Bomharji Bhowani Singh, grandson of the Rajah. Bhowani Singh has a son, about two years old (in 1862), so that there were four generations living. The two sitting figures on the Maharajah's left are ministerial officers. The state is a very small one, its revenue being from one lac to one lac and a half, £10,000 to £15,000 a year; but the affairs are well administered by the Rajah. He was heavily taxed by Sindia, and under the treaty this state was assessed at Rs. 60,000 per annum, of which Sindia has remitted Rs. 5,000, and it is hoped may consent to a further reduction, though at the present he has declined. In his report for 1869-70, the Political Agent recommends a loan for irrigation purposes to the Rajah, which would enable him to bring more land into cultivation. During the famine in Rajpootana, in 1869, the Rajah, in spite of his narrow means, was most charitable to the starving crowds who betook themselves to Seetamhow for relief. Lieut. Waterhouse, in 1862, mentions also his great hospitality and kindness.



RAJAH OF SEETAMHOW AND DURBAR.

RAJPOOT.

MALWAH.

378.

THAKOORS OF SEETAMHOW AND DURBAR.

(379)

THESE are officers of the Seetamhow court. The third from the left hand is Maharaj Tukht Singh, the youngest son of the Maharajah, who is Thakoor of Chikla. No. 2 is Ruttun Singh Chowhan, Thakoor of Dupa Khera, also a relative : but there is no other record regarding these persons.



THAKOORS OF SEETAMHOW.

AND DURBAR.

RAJPOOT. MALWAH.

MUSSULMANS OF MUNDISSOOR.

(380)

MALWAH formed one of the earliest conquests of the Mussulman Kings of India. In the year A.D. 1226, the Emperor Shumsh Oodeen Altmish captured the celebrated fort of Mandoo, where a garrison was established; and in 1231 took Gwalior and Oojeyn, where he destroyed the ancient temples and palaces of the Hindoo King Vikram Aditya. Malwah continued to be a province of the Delhi monarchy till 1387, when it became independent under Dilawar Khan (Ghoory or Ghori), until 1526, when the dynasty ceased to exist, and the kingdom was annexed by the Emperor Aurungzeeb, and included in the viceroyalty of Guzerat. During the decay of the Mogul empire, it was overrun by the Mahrattas, and now belongs partly to them, Sindia, Holkar, and Dhar, and partly to the British Government, being interspersed with petty states, which are dependant on one or other of the great powers.

The Mussulman population, though sparse, is yet of considerable antiquity, and is descended from the former conquerors and settlers, chiefly Afghans and Pathans; but they have no power, except at Jowrah and Bhopal, and serve as military and civil servants of those states, and also with Holkar and Sindia. Although locally so powerful during the existence of the Ghori dynasty, and in some degree a settled population, the conquest and settlement of the Gond and Bheel countries, to the east and south-east, seems never to have been attempted, or even their conversion to the Mussulman faith. In those times the Gond chieftains were extremely powerful, and were inaccessible in their mountain fastnesses. Of the subject of the Photograph, the two persons in the centre belong to the ordinary military classes; those on the right and left hold ministerial situations under the Nawab of Jowrah. None of these differ in any respect from ordinary Mussulmans, either in religion or habits.



MUSSULMANS OF MUNDISSOOR

JOWRAH.

CENTRAL INDIA.

NAWAB OF JOWRAH AND NEPHEWS.

(381)

THE Nawab is seated in the centre, very richly dressed, wearing necklaces of pearls and emeralds. His name is Ghous Mahomed Khan, a Pathan, and the son of the celebrated Ghuffoor Khan, who was a distinguished general of Holkar's, upon whom, by the treaty of Mundissoor, after the battle of Mehidpore, the districts of Jowrah, Tal, Mulhargurh, &c., were settled. Of these possessions, Jowrah became the capital, and rapidly improved. The present Nawab is an intelligent and enlightened ruler. He understands and can write English, and he is very hospitable to all European travellers passing through his state.

His father, Ghuffoor Khan, was an officer under the celebrated Ameer Khan, of Tonk and Rampoorra, originally in the service of Jeswunt Rao Holkar, and had married Ameer Khan's wife's sister. On one occasion, when Ameer Khan was obliged to leave Malwah, he left his forces and interests in the hands of Ghuffoor Khan, who was raised to the rank of Nawab, and had a jahgeer or estate conferred upon him by Holkar. The grant was equal to Rs. 20,000 per annum, and included the maintenance of 1,000 horse. The court of Holkar was then torn by factions and intrigues. Jeswunt Rao was insane, and afterwards died; and his mistress Toolsa Bye carried on the government as regent, on the part of an adopted child. There were many other parties contending for local power; but Ghuffoor Khan espoused the cause of the young Holkar, preserved him from violence, and continued attached to him, till the murder of Toolsa Bye and the battle of Mehidpore destroyed all faction at Holkar's court, and left the young prince free. Ghuffoor Khan's possessions were secured to him by the XII. article of the treaty of Mundissoor, which enumerates the districts, and provides that they shall descend to Ghuffoor Khan's heirs, on condition of his maintaining a body of 600 horse; and the observance of this grant is guaranteed by the British Government. The Nawab's estates have much improved since then, and his cavalry are employed in maintaining the peace of the country. By the Political Agent's report for 1869-70, we find that the state of Jowrah continues to be

NAWAB OF JOWRAH AND NEPHEWS.

admirably managed, and that the revenue has increased. Fresh land has been brought under the plough, thirty-nine wells sunk, and a mint and two new schools have been built. The roads also have been put in repair. Much relief was afforded to starving poor from Rajpootana and Marwar, both from the state and from individuals.



• NAWAB OF JOWRAH AND NEPHEWS

MU'SSULMANS.

JOWRAH.

• 381.

DURBAR.—COURT OF JOWRAH.

(382)

THE court of Jowrah is shown in this Photograph by Lieut. Waterhouse, and is one of his best pictures. The Nawab sits in the centre, and his nephews, shown in the last Plate, will be recognised. All the others are Pathan gentlemen, except the figure on the left, who is a Mahomedan moulyee, a very able physician, who is in the service of the Maharajah Holkar, and usually resides at his court. The stout man sitting on the proper right of the Nawab is Huzat Noor Khan, a Swatee Pathan, and manager of the state. They are all connected by marriage, in one way or other, with each other.



DURBAR COURT OF JOWRAH.

JOWRAH.

CENTRAL INDIA.

382.

RAJAH OF SILLANA.

(383)

DUDAI SINGH, Rajah of Sillana, is a Rahtore Rajpoot. He is related to the Rajah of Rutlam, and the connection of the British Government with both occurred in the year 1819, after the battle of Mehidpore, and pacification of Malwah and Central India. Sillana and Rutlam had been tributary to Sindia, and in 1819, Bapoo Sindia, a commander in Sindia's service, was dispatched with a large irregular force, to exact payment of tribute from both states. The Rajpoots flew to arms, but as all parties appealed to the British representative (Sir John Malcolm), a settlement was made, by which, without the expenses of collection, the tribute of both states was secured to Sindia, while they were protected from the predatory acts of Sindia's forces. The amount of tribute paid by Sillana to Sindia is Rs. 42,000 S. S. In other respects the Rajah is independent.

The state does not, however, appear to be in a satisfactory condition; it is not well managed, and it is still heavily in debt, which the Rajah in 1866 bound himself to discharge.



RAJAH OF SILLANA.

RAJPOOT.

SILLANA.

383.

THAKOOR HURREE SINGH.

(384)

THE official record is silent on the subject of this person ; and it can only be presumed that he is one of the Thakoors or barons of the small state and court of Sillana, who is in nowise remarkable.



THAKOOR HURREE SINGH.

RAJPOOT.

SILLANA.

384.

RAJAH OF RUTLAM.

(385)

BHAROO SINGHJI, Rajah of Rutlam, is a Rahtore Rajpoot, and has a grand, chieftainlike appearance, though in reality a man of diminutive stature for a Rajpoot, being only five feet three inches in height. He wears a turban, which supports a plume of feathers, and is covered with fine strings of pearls, depending from a rich central jewel, and other gold ornaments. About his neck also, and over his breast, are necklaces of pearls, rubies, and emeralds, with jewels dependent from them. His coat is of cloth of gold, his trousers of pink satin, and his waistbelt of red silk striped with gold tissue. He wears also heavy gold anklets, and his slippers are richly embroidered. The scabbard of his sword is also remarkable.

In the preceding article on Sillana, his relations with the British Government are mentioned as being the same as that state, and he pays to Sindia an annual tribute of Rs. 84,000 S. S., "to be paid regularly in four instalments. On failure of payment, land to the value of the instalment to be taken." Sindia also agreed never to send troops into the country, or to interfere with the succession, or in its national administration, in any way whatever. This agreement between Bappoo Sindia and the Rajah of Rutlam was mediated by Sir John Malcolm, 5th January, 1819.

The present condition of the state is extremely satisfactory, and the report on it by the Superintendent Meer Shahamut Ali, an eminently practical and well written document. He has visited England, is a good English scholar, and has been distinguished in the political department for many years. He was appointed by Major Meade to his present office, at a time when Rutlam was torn by factions, its revenue declined to a minimum, and there seemed no hope of its recovery; but under the judicious management of this gentleman, it has recovered from all difficulties, and is now prosperous in all respects. We find an excellent practical administration of justice, good jails, and police establishments. The country has been surveyed and moderately assessed, which has given great

RAJAH OF RUTLAM.

satisfaction to the people; and all middle men and farmers of villages have been abolished. The revenue, which was Rs. 328,755 in 1864, has risen to Rs. 542,568 in 1870, and deducting all expenditure, leaves a comfortable surplus.

Among other essential reforms, we find it mentioned that Meer Shahamut Ali is using his best endeavours to abolish the system of early marriages, and to persuade Rajpoot families to contract their expenses in marriage ceremonies, from which infanticide proceeds, a crime still very prevalent; but, as the Agent to the Governor General observes, "in the free discussion of the barbarous practice, with Rajpoots, face to face, by men like the Superintendent, more good will ensue than in the orders and exhortations of British officers." We remark, too, with pleasure, the progress of schools and dispensaries, of roads, and of public works of many kinds, and consider the employment of Meer Shahamut Ali, as a subordinate political agent, to have been a high success. Cannot more men like him be found? No minor ~~states~~ of Central India are reported upon in such high terms as Rutlam, Jowrah, and Bhopal, and the progress is evidently real and sound in all.



RAJAH OF RUTLAM.

RAJPOOT, RUTLAM.

CENTRAL INDIA.

ANUND RAO PUAR.

(386)

SIR JOHN MALCOLM gives the following account of Dhar:—"The district contains about 400 square miles, and when properly cultivated, yields almost every tropical production, and, amongst others, opium. It comprehends 179 villages, all of which are situated in level or hilly tracts, and peopled by Bheels. In 1826 the number of inhabited houses was 7,573 and its population about 37,835 souls, in the proportion of one Mahomedan to sixteen Hindoos.

"The city of Dhar appears at one period to have covered a great extent of ground, and is said to have contained 20,000 houses. In 1820 the number did not amount to 5,000, but the population was then rapidly increasing. In length it may be about three-fourths of a mile by half a mile in breadth, and is surrounded by a mud wall. The interior, however, contains some good buildings, and is watered by eight large and two small tanks. The fort is entirely detached from the city, standing on a rising ground about forty feet above the plain. The walls are about thirty feet high, and fortified with round and square towers. Dhar is the head of a petty state, and the residence of the Rajah, whose palace is substantially built of stone. In 1826 his revenue amounted to Rs. 125,000 per annum. Dhar is called Dhara Nugger by the Hindoos. It is probably the ancient Dhara Nugger; but its importance in the authentic history of Malwah is chiefly derived from its becoming, on the transfer of the government from Oojein, the seat of the princes of that province previously to their final establishment at Mandoo. This was effected by Rajah Bhoj (the great), who was the eleventh in descent from Vikram Aditya, or Vikram Ajeet, whose era, 56 before Christ, is still current in the Deccan."

Previously, however, Dhar appears to have been held from a vast antiquity by the Puar or Powar tribe of Rajpoots, which is traceable for 1,058 years in its rule over Malwah, of which Dhar or Dharwarra was the capital. At what period the Puars of Dhar, or a branch of them, emigrated to the Deccan, is not known; but they were zemindars and landholders there when Sivajee rose to power, became leaders of troops in the national cause, and continued to be so after Sivajee's

death. One of the family, Oodajee, rose higher than his brethren, and was selected to establish the predatory claims of the Mahrattas over Malwah and Guzerat; but having fallen under the displeasure of the Peshwah Bajee Rao, his younger brother Anund Rao succeeded him, and founded the principality of Dhar, the ancient capital of their race. He died in 1749, and his son Jeswunt was killed in the battle of Paniput, against the Afghans, under Ahmed Shah Abdalli, leaving an infant son, Anund Rao, two and a half years old, who, with his mother, Anundee Bye, was carried prisoner to the Deccan. How this noble woman struggled to preserve her son and his state, and succeeded, is subject of Mahratta history; but Dhar seemed fated to be unfortunate. Anund Rao died young, leaving his wife Meena pregnant; and the vicissitudes of this suffering lady, which Sir John Malcolm has detailed in chapter 4 of his *Central India*, in his usual graphic manner, have not lost their interest. Meena Bye's son died, but she adopted a boy of her own tribe, and she was found acting as regent when Malwah was wrested from the Peshwah in the last Mahratta war. The state was miserably poor. The Puars, helpless as they were, had been harried by Sindia, Holkar, the Gaekwar, and the hereditary enemies of the house, till the country was desolate and a bare subsistence left; and it may be conceived with what gratitude the widow regent welcomed a power which set her free, and re-established the principality.

Until the mutiny of 1857, the state of Dhar continued to progress quietly. The minor Rajah, established by Sir John Malcolm, was dead, but his son, a minor, reigned in his stead. Taking advantage of the troubles of the close of that year, about 4,000 rebels of various kinds took possession of the strong fort, and were attacked in it by Brigadier Stuart, of the Bombay army. These rebels were at first defiant, and a breach had to be made; but previous to the storm of the place they decamped in the night, and joined another body in the vicinity of Mundissoor. The fortifications of Dhar were then dismantled and blown up.

It was for some time doubtful whether Dhar, from its mutinous opposition to British troops, would not be annexed, and the Rajah pensioned; but as he was an irresponsible minor at the time, he was reinstated in his authority. The state was administered by the Political Agency, and is now very prosperous; the receipts from all sources being Rs. 571,461, which, deducting the expenditure (Rs. 504,264), leaves a surplus of Rs. 66,297. The Rajah has invested Rs. 500,000 in 4 per cent. Government Securities, and has a considerable cash balance in his treasury. In this respect, as indeed in most others, Dhar is an exception to the general rule of debt and difficulty. The young chief manages his own affairs, but is difficult of access, and thus inconvenience is felt by his subjects; but it is probable he will listen to advice, and appoint a responsible minister ere long. He takes great interest in schools, and is reported to be anxious and willing to attend to the desires of the British Government.



ANUNDR AO PUAR

RAJAH OF DHAR.

DHAR.

386

HIS HIGHNESS THE MAHARAJAH HOLKAR.

(387)

THE Maharajah Tukajee Holkar is the present representative of the family which for several generations has provided the most eminent and illustrious men and women among the Mahrattas. The family itself is of obscure origin. Holkar's progenitors were shepherds and cultivators in the village of Hull, in the Deccan, from which their surname Holkar, or more properly, perhaps Hullker, is derived. Mulhar Rao was the son of Khuudajee, and was born in the year 1693 or thereabouts, and, in consequence of some dispute, his mother took him to his uncle Narainjee, who resided in Khandesh, and they abode there. Here the young Mulhar watched his uncle's sheep, and a legend is related of him, that as he lay asleep in a field, a cobra de capella snake raised its hood between his face and the sun, to keep off its rays. From this strange circumstance great glory was augured, and his uncle placed him in command of a small body of horse, in the service of Kudum Bandee, a Mahratta leader, where he soon very highly distinguished himself by acts of valour; and eventually the then Peshwab, Bajee Rao, took him into the service of the state, and gave him the command of 500 horse. In the conquest of the Concan, and war with Nizam Ali, he gained higher fame and promotion; and in 1728 was appointed to the charge of districts in Malwah, which were augmented in 1731, and the general interests of the Mahrattas in Malwah confided to him. Subsequently, and till his death, which occurred in 1769, at the ripe age of seventy-six, Mulhar Rao continued with great success the predatory system of warfare, which formed the basis of the Mahratta policy, and for which his daring valour peculiarly qualified him. He was also a distinguished and merciful administrator, and if not, according to Sir John Malcolm, so great a politician as Dowlut Rao Sindia, surpassed him as a warrior.

Mulhar Rao had one son, Khundee Rao, who was killed, before his father's death, at the siege of Kamthero. This prince had married Ahlia Bye, who had one son, Khundee Rao, and one daughter; but Khundee Rao the younger was insane, and as long as he lived his mother acted as Regent of the state, and conducted the

affairs with such admirable ability and skill, that on her unfortunate son's death, though many intrigues were set afoot to prevent her, she continued to reign over the Holkar state, now a recognised member of the national confederacy. It would be impossible within our limits to follow out the career of this distinguished woman to its close, as Sir John Malcolm has detailed it from authentic sources; but it is a wonderful record of political skill in troubled times, of successful internal administration, and of benevolence and charity, which extended to all parts of India, as well as to all distressed persons in her own dominions. She founded colleges, built and endowed temples, dug wells and tanks, and set a mark upon her times, which the lapse of years has only made brighter and more prominent, and will never be effaced. At the same time her husband's cousin, Tukajee, whom she had placed in command of the army, served her with a singular and unbroken zeal and fidelity, maintaining, both in war and peace, the high reputation of the state. Ahlia Bye was sixty years old when she died, for nearly forty of which she had acted with entire harmony with Tukajee, her cousin, who only survived her two years. Then the family began to break up. Ahlia Bye had no heir, but Tukajee had two legitimate sons, Kasi Rao and Mulhar Rao, and two illegitimate, Jeswunt Rao and Etojee. Of these, Mulhar Rao was soon after killed in defence of his camp, which was attacked by Sindia. Kasi Rao was of weak intellect, and Jeswunt Rao, after many wild adventures and strange vicissitudes, became leader of the Holkar state; and in 1779 he was at the head of 60,000 men, having recovered all or most of the family lands, and some, if not all, of Ahlia Bye's accumulations. Between Jeswunt Rao and Sindia no peace had ever existed, and in an attack on Indore by Sindia's army, not only was Jeswunt Rao defeated, but lost all his material of war, while the city was cruelly plundered. In revenge, Jeswunt Rao, assisted by Amcer Khan and his Pathans, now betook himself to plunder, ravaging Sindia's and the Peshwah's country indiscriminately, and collecting a vast booty. This brought on a combination on the part of the Peshwah and Sindia to suppress him altogether; but Jeswunt Rao marched to Poona, defeated the combined armies there on the 25th October, 1802, and plundered Poona to supply the arrears due to his troops. He then departed northwards. Sindia, then on the eve of war with the British, strove to induce Jeswunt Rao to join him; but, instead, Jeswunt Rao began to plunder, and in one of his expeditions he obtained from the city of Mundissoor booty to the value of a million sterling. His wild career need not be followed, nor his war with the British, and his unwearying attempts to reform his army. Eventually, from excessive drinking, he became insane, and he died on the 20th October, 1811.

A period of unbridled anarchy ensued. Mulhar Rao, Jeswunt Rao's son, was protected by Toolsee Bye, his father's mistress, who, under the support of a faction, became Regent, and was eventually murdered by the partisans of those

who had opposed her. Toolsee Bye, in 1817, desired the protection of the British for herself and the young Holkar. The army, on the contrary, saw their own destruction inevitable, under any alliance with the British; and on the arrival of Sir Thomas Hislop's force in the neighbourhood of Indore, it was attacked on the 21st December, 1817, by Holkar's forces, who were totally defeated at Mehidpoor, with the loss of all their guns, and it was then discovered that Toolsee Bye had been put to death the night before. The battle was followed by the treaty of Mundissoor, negotiated by Sir John Malcolm, which defined the territories of the state, which were to be defended against all external and internal enemies. By the death of Jeswunt Rao, and the subsequent events and arrangements, the predatory power of the Holkar state was extinguished, and Northern India delivered from one of the most terrible scourges from which it had ever suffered, and which, but for British interference, must eventually have desolated the whole country. Out of the wrecks of Holkar's and other native armies, the Pindharees arose; but in two short campaigns they were completely broken, and resolved into the general classes from which they had risen.

Since the Mahratta and Pindharee wars closed, there has been nothing to interrupt the prosperity of the state. The mutiny and rebellion had little effect upon it, and the mutinous troops having at once marched to join the main body of the rebel army, Holkar was spared the loss and the vexation which attended his brother potentate Sindia. Holkar's state ought to be very prosperous, but the chief's mind is perhaps too active and restless to ensure quiet prosperity. He would have a railway, which is partly completed, cotton mills, and all sorts of English improvements; but at present he is in trouble about his revenue assessments, and is too hard and grasping in regard to his subjects the laudholders and cultivators. He would fain do everything himself, take up projects and abandon them, and start others with a like result. In short in everything but his faith to the British Government he seems to be hard to manage; but he has complete freedom from interference in the affairs of his state, and is solely responsible to his subjects for them. The investigation into rent-free lands has been a hard one, and has incited discontent and distrust, which it will be difficult for him to overcome. Personally Tukajee Rao Holkar is a most courteous prince, alike to his subjects as to the English around him; and were he as steady in his administrative capacity as his fine talents should make him, there would not be a more popular, or a more practically useful native prince in India, and this he may yet become by experience. He is much interested in education, and in his college at Indore instruction in English as well as in native languages is soundly imparted.



HIS HIGHNESS THE MAHARAJAH HOLKAR.

HINDOO.

INDORE.

387.

RAM RAO NARRAIN.

(388)

RAM RAO NARRAIN is the Prime Minister of the state of Holkar. He is a Brahmin of the Deccan, and a man of great intelligence and ability ; but as the Maharajah governs himself, it is probable that he has no authority beyond the regulation of details.



RAM RAO NARRAIN.

PRIME MINISTER.

INDORE.

388.

HER HIGHNESS NAWAB SEKUNDER, BEGUM, G.C.S.I.

(389-90)

THE history of the Bhopal state is interesting from its illustration of the foundation of the principality by an Afghan adventurer at a comparatively late period. Sir John Malcolm in his *Central India* gives a particular account of the state of Bhopal, and of its family, to which the general reader may be referred, but a short sketch of the principal events of its history may not be out of place in regard to the representative of its present distinguished ruler, who is the only female sovereign in India.

Dost Mahomed Khan, a young Pathan of the Mirajee Kheil tribe, came to India near the close of the Emperor Aurungzeeb's reign, and entered the service of Jelal Khan, a nobleman of the same tribe, and an officer of the Emperor's court; but he soon after joined the service of the Emperor himself, and was employed in Malwah, then much disturbed by plunderers. Here he obtained charge of the district of Bersiah, and, partly by conquest, and partly by marrying the daughter of a Hindoo landholder of great wealth, established himself at Jugdespoor, after slaying in a foray the chief of that place, when the name was changed to Islamabad. He afterwards, however, built a citadel at Bhopal, which became his capital. He died in 1723, at the age of sixty-six; his life had been passed in almost perpetual warfare, especially the latter thirty years, and he had earned, by upwards of thirty wounds, the reputation of a gallant soldier.

Dost Mahomed had two sons, the eldest, Yar Mahomed Khan, had been made over to Nizam-ool-Moolk, Viceroy of the Deccan, as security for good conduct, and was absent, and the younger, Sultan Mahomed, was proclaimed successor to his father. Yar Mahomed had, however, made friends in the Nizam's court, and was sent to Bhopal with a strong escort, where the family council received him, and did not object to his conducting public affairs, though, as he was illegitimate, he could not be recognised as chief according to the customs of the tribe, which were in full effect in Bhopal. Yar Mahomed Khan left four sons, the eldest of whom at the age of eleven succeeded him, and reigned thirty-eight years, but

being of weak intellect, took no very prominent part in public affairs; and for some years during his life and after his death Bhopal was the scene of continued struggles among the Afghan chiefs and the members of the family. Bhopal had, however, attracted attention, and on the return of the Peshwah, Bajee Rao, from Delhi, he encamped with his army near Bhopal, and demanded restitution in the Emperor's name of all the lands usurped by the family. Had they resisted then they would have lost all, but they made considerable sacrifices to save a portion, which was guaranteed to them by treaty. At this period the revenues of the Bhopal state were about twenty lacs (£200,000) per annum. It was during the administration of Foulad Khan, by birth a Gond, but who had been adopted by Hyat Mahomed Khan, that General Goddard, at the head of a brigade of the Bengal army, marched across India to the assistance of the Bombay troops against the Mahrattas, and was entertained at Bhopal with true kindness and hospitality, and his progress was furthered by every possible means. This was the first acquaintance of the Bhopal family with the English, and the mutual attachment has never been broken. The ruler himself, unless a man of vigour and ability, seems to have been of little account among this turbulent Pathan family. Foulad Khan was killed in a family quarrel, and the Begum, wife of Yar Mahomed, who appears to have been actual ruler, chose Chutta Khan as dewan or minister, who advanced the interests of the state and the prosperity of the people very materially, and to the last had the confidence of his princess, one of the most remarkable women of her time.

This successor to Chutta Khan, who was killed in an engagement with members of the family, was Moreed Mahomed Khan, a tyrant and a traitor, who, to protect himself, called in the aid of the Mahrattas, but they were forced to retire by Vizier Khan. They, however, advanced against Bhopal, and besieged the place for nine months; but it was obstinately defended, and they were obliged to retire. On the death of Vizier Mahomed, his second son Nuzzur Mahomed succeeded him. At the commencement of the campaign of 1817, an engagement was entered into by the British at Hooshungabad, with the actual ruler of the country, Nuzzur Mahomed, guaranteeing the Bhopal territory to him and his family, and stipulating for his aiding the British Government with a contingent. He received the fort of Islamnuggur as a reward for his services, and all the original possessions of Bhopal were restored to him. This brave and good prince was killed by an accident; he was playing with his infant daughter, and had laid by his pistols, when his brother-in-law, Fonjdar Khan, then a child eight years old, began playing with one of them, when it accidentally went off and killed the prince. His death was deeply deplored by all classes. After the death of Nuzzur Mahomed there was a dispute regarding the succession, but it ended in the daughter of Nuzzur Mahomed Khan, the present Sekunder Begum, marrying

her cousin, Jehangeer Mahomed Khan. She had a daughter, Shah Jehan, who married Oomrao Dulha, and had two daughters, Sultan Jehan and Sulieman Jehan. The character of Sekunder Begum is well known: she behaved very steadfastly and loyally during the mutiny, supporting the British against all her own relations and dependants, who would have risen in rebellion; and she was a wise and beneficent ruler. It is probably owing to her wisdom at this crisis that the state of Bhopal has been preserved. Had she joined the rebellion openly, or, indeed, under any circumstances, the British Government might, probably would, have swept away a tribe of Pathans notorious for turbulence and internal intrigues and contests. The Begum has received the honour of the order of the Star of India in its highest rank, and is the only lady who holds it except Her Majesty the Queen.

The city of Bhopal is handsome and well kept; it is situated on the borders of a fine artificial lake or tank, which is a mile and a half wide and about four miles long. The dam was originally constructed in probably about the fourth century after Christ, by Bhopal, the minister of Rajah Bhoj, of Malwah, who founded the town of Bhojpoor, near the site of a great mound built by Rajah Bhoj in pursuance of a vow to dam up nine rivers and ninety-nine tributaries. The dam and tank was swept away, though its legend is preserved in the appellation of "tal," or tank, which was given to its site. The Bhopal tal, or tank, was formed by the ninety-eighth river, or rivulet, and is still in excellent order.

The Begum of Bhopal was truly faithful to the English cause in the mutiny of 1857-58. She refused with contempt the summons of the King of Delhi to join with him; and, though many of her nobles and retainers would have decided against the English, she restrained them all, and protected all fugitives who resorted to her; she assisted troops which passed through her territories, and in all respects comported herself as a true and loyal subject of England. When the rebellion was over, she attended the darbar which was held by Lord Canning at Jubbulpoor, when he addressed her as follows:—

"Sekunder Begum, your Highness is very welcome to this darbar. I have long desired to thank you for the services you have rendered to the Queen's Government. Your Highness is the ruler of a state which is conspicuous in Indian history, for never having been in arms against the British power; and lately, when that state was beset and threatened by our enemies, you, a woman, guided its affairs with a courage, an ability, and success, that would have done honour to any statesman or soldier. Besides the greater service of repressing revolt around you, and of securing the safety of all Englishmen, amongst whom was the Agent of the Governor-General, you never failed to aid and expedite to the utmost of your power all bodies of British troops that came within your reach. Such services must not go unrewarded; I now place in your hands the grant in sovereignty of the district of Burseah. The district was formerly a dependency of

HER HIGHNESS NAWAB SEKUNDER BEGUM, G.C.S.I.

the state Dhar; but Dhar has, by rebellion, forfeited all claim to it, and it is now given in perpetuity to Bhopal for a memorial of loyalty under your wise guidance in a time of trial."

The gift of territory was accompanied by the insignia of the grand companionship of the Star of India. The Begum had indeed been a remarkable woman all her life; she rode well, and used the spear and matchlock; she went abroad freely among her subjects, and denied herself to none. She had paid off all the debts of the state, and with twenty-two lacs of revenue and an expenditure of eleven, she had made Bhopal one of the most flourishing states of India. The Begum Sekunder died in November, 1868, and was succeeded by her daughter, Shah Jehan, in the regular female succession of the state, who now rules Bhopal on the same principles as her honoured mother.



HER HIGHNESS.
NAWAB SEKUNDER, BEGUM, G.C.S.I.
BHOPAL.



HER HIGHNESS.
NAWAB SEKUNDER, BEGUM, G.C.S.I.
BHOPAL.

HER HIGHNESS SHAH JEHAN, BEGUM, K.C.S.I.

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NAWAB OOMRA DULHA.

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THIS lady, as previously stated, is the daughter of the late Sekunder Begum. Her late husband was, when she married him in 1856, the bukshee' or paymaster of Bhopal, and was a remarkably handsome man. He died at Bhopal in 1869 or 1870, and Her Highness remains a widow. She has not in any way deviated from the admirable principles of government established by her mother, and displays equal ability and vigour in her proceedings. Her state is therefore in a high state of prosperity, and her subjects content and prosperous. Every successive administration report on Western Malwah contains a special tribute to her praise, written upon details of her most creditable administration and general conduct. The Begum went to Calcutta to meet H.R.H. the Duke of Edinburgh, by whom she was received with marked courtesy and honour. She also attended His Excellency the Viceroy's durbar in Bombay, on which occasion she was installed as a Knight Commander of the Star of India, and took great interest in all she saw there. Since then Her Highness has contemplated making a branch railway to connect Bhopal with the G. I. P. Railway, but no commencement has been made as yet. In education she takes great personal interest, and has herself studied English so as to write, read, and speak it fairly. She is very fond of the society of English ladies, and has learned many accomplishments, such as needlework, embroidery, and the like. She is having her daughter educated like an English lady. Thus in every way the condition of Bhopal appears to merit the high encomiums recorded of it.



HER HIGHNESS.
SHAH JEHAN, BEGUM, K.C.S.I.
BHOPAL.



NAWAB OOMRA DULHA.

(HER LATE HUSBAND.)

BHOPAL.

NAWAB MOIZ MAHOMED KHAN AND SON.

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NAWAB FOUJDAR MAHOMED KHAN AND SONS.

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THE two elderly gentlemen represented, Moiz Mahomed Khan and Foujdar Mahomed Khan, are uncles of Her Highness Sekunder Begum, and both hold high offices in the Bhopal state.

These Afghans are a fine-looking tall race of men; they have remarkably handsome features, piercing dark eyes, aquiline noses, and a proud independent bearing. They are a very haughty, cruel, and vindictive race, and treacherous. The Bhopal Afghans have not in any degree lost the appearance or the character of their parent race, though the latter may have become somewhat softened by intercourse with Hindoos and English, but they are very bigoted Mussulmans. The Pathans of Bhopal are not distinguished by activity in manly sports or exercises; they are grown indolent and sensual, and their time is passed in eating, smoking, and sleeping. Owing to the dissipated lives they lead they are not very long lived, but moulvees, and others who lead temperate lives, attain a good old age. There are very few others beside the military classes of Mussulmans at Bhopal, and the religious rites and belief of none of them differ from other Mussulmans of India. But they permit a very limited jurisdiction on the part of the state over their families, which are managed, after the Afghan custom, by themselves. As a rule, with the exception of the higher classes, they are generally illiterate.



NAWAB MOIZ MAHOMED KHAN AND SON.

BHOPAL.

CENTRAL INDIA.

393.



NAWAB FOUJDAR.

MAHOMED KHAN

BHOPAL.

394.

NAWAB JUMALOODEEN BAHADUR.

(395)

THE Dewan is not a pure Afghan, but has an admixture of Hindoo blood. His ancestors in the fourth and fifth generations were Hindoos of the Kullal, or distillers' caste, and were made Mussulman proselytes in the time of the Emperors of Delhi. The Dewan's great grandfather was employed as canoongo to the late King of Delhi, and his grandfather was a chobdar, or mace-bearer, in the late King's service. His father was well educated, and employed in the service of the British Government. His uncle was for many years employed as Meer moonshee in the Indore Presidency, when Jumaloodeen was a clerk or mutsuddy on ten rupees per month. Thence he was dismissed for some fault, and obliged to return to his father in Delhi, and there passed several years of his life in reduced circumstances. At last he procured a letter of recommendation from a mutivee in Delhi to one of the officers of Sekunder Begum, and was taken into Her Highness's service as a mutsuddy; and having been well educated in Delhi, and naturally of a grave and thoughtful mind, he became a great favourite, and rose rapidly, by his ability and perseverance, to the high rank he now holds. Jumaloodeen personally is a most amiable, upright man, and has proved himself an able statesman and councillor. At the time of the mutinies he was absent on a pilgrimage to Mecca. His age is fifty-five, and he is a tall, good-looking man.



NAWAB JUMALOODDEEN BAHADUR.

(DEWAN.)

BHOPAL.

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RAJAH KISSEN RAM.

(396)

RAJAH KISSEN RAM is a Khayet by caste. He rose from the lowest rank of cucherry employés. He was under minister, and was much respected in Bhopal. He was very amiable and very industrious, and has lately died, to the regret of all.



RAJAH KISSEN RAM
LATE UNDER MINISTER.
BHOPAL.

GOSAIS.

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GOSAIS, or Gosains, do not differ in any part of India. They have been previously described. They may be of any caste, except that of Brahmins, and are a class of devotees who are supposed to have abandoned worldly pursuits, and live upon public charity. They are followers of Siva or Mahadeo, and frequent temples dedicated to him; but they are wanderers, visiting holy shrines, and making pilgrimages to all parts of India. They have occasionally entered the services of native princes as soldiers, and in the service of the Peshwah of the Mahrattas were much esteemed and honoured for their conspicuous bravery. They do not all, however, follow a devotee's life: some of them are traders and bankers, and have attained eminence as such in many localities. They never marry, but some have concubines. They adopt, when they are rich, boys who become cheylas, or disciples, and who inherit their property.



GOSAIS.
HINDOO DEVOTEES.
BERAR.

ROHILLAS.

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ROHILLAS are Afghans who have emigrated from their native country, and taken service with H.H. the Nizam's government, or with individuals. They are turbulent and cruel when in bodies, and given to plunder, without mercy to man or woman. They have frequently joined to support local insurrections, but have suffered heavily from contact with regular troops on all occasions. In 1845-6 General Fraser, Resident at Hyderabad, induced the Nizam's government to discharge Rohillas from its service. Great numbers of them were collected at Hyderabad, and dispatched to the frontier under military escort; but most of them returned, having no means of reaching Afghanistan. Berar, the northern frontier province of the Nizam's dominions, was their point of rendezvous for many years; but few remain there now, except those who have adopted peaceable habits and occupations. One of those represented in the Photograph, an old man, has settled near Oomrawutty, and the other is a jemadar in the Berar regular police. Rohillas in the Deccan have for the most part merged into the general Mussulman population, and not unfrequently contract local marriages. They do not differ in any way as to habits and food from the ordinary Mussulmans of the country.



ROHILLAS.

MUSSULMANS.

BERAR.

398.

G O N D S.

(899)

OF all the forest races in India the Gonds are the most numerous and, in many respects, most interesting. Their numbers in the Central Provinces may be assumed as nearly two millions, and they extend from the northern frontier of Berar to the borders of Bengal, and from the northern line of the Vindhya mountains to the southern frontier of Nagpoor. Within this area the Gonds established several independent states or monarchies, extending to a great antiquity. One of their chronicles, that of Chandah, shows them to have been the local rulers in A.D. 870; and there is evidence in the noble architectural remains of that city and its districts, and in the many fine tanks or artificial lakes, with which the district abounds, of a high standard of civilization. They seem to have been almost independent of the Mussulman dynasties of Delhi and of the Deccan and Berar. The last independent prince was Nilkunt Shah, a cruel tyrant, who estranged the affections of his people, and delivered up the city to a Mahratta army under Raghoji Bhoslay, who annexed the kingdom to the Mahratta dominions in 1751, and it continued in the possession of the Nagpoor family until the annexation of that state by the British Government. Besides Chandah, principalities founded by Gonds existed at Ballalpeer, Chhindwara, Damoh, Nagpoor, Nursingpoor, and in Gondwana, some of which were very powerful, in particular the dynasty of Garha Mandla, which can be traced back as early as A.D. 634, but attained its greatest power under Sangram Sa in 1530, having successfully withstood attacks by the Mussulman Kings of the Deccan and Berar in succession. In 1564, however, Asaf Khan, Viceroy of the Emperor of Delhi, invaded the kingdom of Gondwana, which was defended by Doorgawutti, its queen, in person, who, being defeated in the final battle, and dreading the Mussulman invader and conqueror, stabbed herself on the field. An enormous booty was the result. The kingdom was not annexed to the imperial dominion, but continued tributary to it until the dissolution of the imperial dynasty. Meanwhile the country was prosperous under a succession of local kings, until

internal disputes arose, which weakened it very materially. The Gond Rajah of Deogurh conquered and attached several districts to his own principality; the Emperor of Delhi took others; finally, in 1742, the Peshwah Bajee Rao invaded the country, and the reigning prince having been killed in battle, his son was placed on the throne, and made tributary to the Mahratta state. Even this did not last, for, in 1781, what remained of its dominions was annexed to the Mahratta administration of Saugor, and, in 1818, Mundlah was transferred to the British at the conclusion of the Mahratta war. The rapacious oppression of the Mahratta government had almost completely desolated Mundlah; and the province has by no means regained the loss of population. It is, however, slowly recovering.

It is impossible within limited space to follow all the other minor Gond principalities in their varied fortunes; but many still exist, and petty Rajahs with small independent or tributary holdings are very numerous. Some of them received grants from the Emperors of Delhi, or from their Viceroy, for the maintenance of the police of the country, and the guarding of the passes; but the majority are chiefs of tribes or sections of tribes, of which there are very many.

The Rev. Mr. Hislop, a good authority, describes the Gond as "a little below the average height of Europeans, and in complexion darker than the generality of Hindoos; bodies well proportioned, but features rather ugly; roundish head, distended ears, wide mouth, thickish lips, and straight dark hair. Both hair and features are decidedly Mongolian, and they have scanty beards and mustachios."

Gond women are better looking than the men, and wives are looked upon as household property, and expected to do much of the field labour, as well as all the household work. A well-to-do farmer has four or five wives, and seven are occasionally met with; but the poorer classes have but one. The women are decently dressed in a sari, generally white, with a coloured border; and it is tied so as to leave the legs from above the knees bare. They do not wear bodices, but the sari, without being passed over the head, covers the bosom and body entirely. They are fond of ornament, in strings of red and white beads, ear and nose rings, anklets of brass and zinc highly polished, and bracelets of the same, with the usual glass rings. The brass and zinc ornaments are changed to gold and silver when they can be afforded. They are very particular about their hair, which they keep well, and increase by plaiting into it tresses of goats' hair, tying the whole at the back like a chignon. Many are much tattooed, the marks being of a blue colour, from the indigo which is rubbed into the punctures.

"Wild, uncivilized, and ignorant," writes Captain Ward, the settlement officer, "the Gonds are among themselves honest, faithful, and trustworthy, courageous in some points, and truthful in regard to the faults they have committed. As a rule, they plead guilty before the courts. As a race, they are now well behaved and

GONDS.

*amenable to authority, however turbulent they may have been in former days. When they could distil ardent spirits themselves, they used to be much addicted to intoxication, especially at their religious ceremonies. This habit has, however, much decreased of late years."

Gonds do not rank among Hindoos. Like the Bheels, and other wild aboriginal tribes, they have a religion or fetish, such as it is, of their own. Several gods are worshipped: Dula Deo, Narain Deo, Suraj Deo, Maha Devi, Bara Deo, Khari Malu Thakur Deo, and Ghansyam. Besides these the Gond believes that the forests are peopled by sprites, good and evil, who are propitiated by offerings at pāts—spots which have been selected, and are marked by a piece of red rag tied to a pole. Here small offerings are made, and on great occasions a fowl and spirits are presented. Gonds have no priests among themselves. They follow the Baigas, a people totally distinct from themselves, with whom they do not intermarry, and whose language, being a dialect of Hindce, is totally different from their own aboriginal tongue. Captain Ward describes them as superior in features and character to the Gonds—indeed, as a very superior race to the Gonds. "Fearless, trustworthy, independent, ready enough to give their opinion and very willing to assist, they manage their communities in a way deserving of great praise. Social crimes, such as abductions of women, are decided by the elders, and theft is unknown. They are fearless and persistent hunters, and first-rate sportsmen, never hesitating to follow up and destroy all sorts of game, by which indeed they are mainly supported."

In religious ceremonies the Baigas much resemble the Gonds, but in addition worship Mai Dharitri, or the earth, and Thakur Deo, who protects the village; but in regard to wood spirits, and the wild localities which they frequent, they are the highest authority. The Gonds believe that they have powers of witchcraft, especially over tigers, in preventing them from carrying off village cattle. The ceremonies of marriage and other rites they perform like the Gonds.

Gonds have seven kinds of marriages, some more binding than others; the highest form is Byah. When a Gond wants to marry his daughter, he looks first for a husband among his sister's children; but the rule is only binding when the brother's child happens to be a girl and the sister's a boy. Where there is no ability to give a dowry, the bridegroom agrees to serve his bride's father for a term of years, which varies according to circumstances, but does not exceed three. In some cases a woman makes her own choice, and refuses the choice made for her; but she can be reclaimed and married to another, especially to one of her first cousins. Thus it appears that Gond customs provide for the marriage of every female under one form or another.

Widows can re-marry in two ways: either by going to the house of a man with whom she has made an arrangement, or by the younger brother of the

GONDS.

deceased husband marrying the widow of his elder brother, as he is expected to do, though she is at liberty to make her own arrangements; a feast to village elders, and a present of new bangles completes the ceremony.

Gonds profess to respect burning their dead, and all women are burnt, as also old men, but young men are buried without the village. If the head male of the house dies, his spirit is supposed to protect the other inmates, and till finally laid at rest by peculiar ceremonies and sacrifices, food is set aside for it. The Baigas perform the last ceremony of freeing the spirit from its earthly bondage. After death, a pin and a little turmeric are tied to a beam in the house; these are taken down, and presented to one of the gods, with some goat's flesh, and a feast concludes the ceremony.

Gonds gain their livelihood by cultivation after a rude fashion, producing only inferior grains, for the most part, in the hilly and forest tracts they inhabit. They also collect gums, honey and bees' wax, hides and skins, tussar cocoons, and other forest produce; and they sell also grass, bamboos, small timber, and firewood, in towns and villages. But they are idle, as far as the necessities of their families will permit them to be. Contrary to Hindoo practice, they have no objection to slaughtering cows and eating beef. They sometimes settle and clear land on the borders of the forests, where the cultivation is of the ordinary kind; but they seldom remain long in such localities, and retreat into their forest life, which is more acceptable to them. As a class they are necessarily perfectly ignorant, and as yet unreclaimed by any education; but a few take service in the police, and are active and trustworthy.

The Gonds, like all forest tribes in all parts of India, are especially fond of dancing; and no classes of the people of India, except the aboriginal tribes, ever dance. On one occasion we were travelling at night through a Gond district, and hearing a very strange noise, like "thrupp, thrupp," repeated regularly, turned aside from the road to a glade where a party of Gonds were assembled. Some women were sitting on the ground, singing a droning kind of song, to which eleven men were dancing in line; and each, with a movement of his right arm, produced the sound "thrupp" from his armpit, in a sort of accompaniment to the drone of the women. The men advanced to them and retired in line, dancing well, throwing out their legs, and performing steps. Sometimes one would dash out of the line, and execute a *pas seul*, and then rejoin the line, to be succeeded by another. We watched them for nearly an hour, but they showed no signs of fatigue; and one of the men, who could speak a little Mahratta, informed us that such dances and others are one of their chief amusements, and joined in by great numbers at festivals.



GONDS
ABORIGINAL TRIBE
BERAR.

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DHAIR.

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UNDER one appellation or other the Dhair belongs to every village community; and, though an outcast according to the Hindoo faith, is indispensable to all; and in every Deccan village holds a respectable station as one of the barah balootay, or village council. The Dhair also is a wutundar, or hereditary occupant and office holder, and, in truth, is an eminently useful person. He is the protector of the village boundary, in regard to which all particulars are transmitted from father to son. In cases of boundary disputes his evidence is very valuable, and also true, for to give false evidence in respect to it would be to court death at the hands of the local divinities. He is also an authority in reference to sites of houses in villages, and in regard to the divisions of lands and the possessions of each hereditary holder, and can point out their boundaries. The Dhair is also the watchman, in a general sense, of the village and its crops. He has to go his rounds at night among the fields, and warn farmers of depredations whether by men or wild animals. He has to carry letters from one village to another, and it is his office to convey the collections made in the village or town to the head receiver of the district, which he does with celerity and faithfulness. He has to remove the carcasses of dead cattle from the village, and obtains the horns and skin as a perquisite. If a traveller arrives he has to procure lodgings for him, and forage and firewood, for which he receives a gratuity; then one of the Dhairs has to carry the traveller's baggage, and act as guide to the next village.

For these services the Dhairs receive rent free lands, of which they divide the produce, and they can cultivate lands if they please. They have also a right to a certain proportion of grain or other produce from all cultivators, and certain dues at village festivals, marriages, burials, or cremations, in the shape of money, shoes, a turban and waistcloth, &c. As a rule the Dhairs are very industrious. They and their women alone spin the finest thread which is used for the highest class muslins, which is produced from cotton treated in a peculiar manner, and spun in a close room kept lightly watered. In some instances they weave coarse cloth,

DHAIR.

but indifferently. With all these useful qualifications, however, the Dhairs are outcasts. They are not allowed to live inside a village, but have a suburb of their own, at some little distance from, or even adjoining the walls, where they have, in many instances, their own temples, generally of Hunooman, the monkey god, or of some form of Devi or Bhowanee. They profess to follow Brahmins, by whom many of their ceremonies are performed; but they have priests of their own, who conduct sacrifices on great occasions. Formerly, under Hindoo rule, Dhairs were much oppressed: they could not wear decent clothing, nor take water, except from certain places; and they were obliged to carry loads without payment. This, however, is altered now. The Dhair is free to do as he pleases; he may even send his children, if he chooses, to school. He can enlist into the infantry or cavalry of the line—and Dhairs make excellent soldiers—or into the police, and many are grooms and officers' servants. Although Dhairs are meanly clad, and look miserably poor, yet they are not unfrequently very well off. They can always obtain a livelihood by work, whether in the fields or at home; and their women, on gala days, are not unfrequently gaily dressed, and wear gold and silver ornaments. They are as industrious as the men, both in the field and at home. Dhairs eat everything—flesh, fowl, and grain; but their ordinary food is simple, and their wives are very good cooks. None of them object to ardent spirits, whether men or women; but, except at some festivals, they do not drink to excess. There can be no doubt that the Dhairs are descended from an aboriginal race; but what it was, or how they became subject to the Aryans, in the capacity they now are, there exists not even a tradition. In the population of the Central Provinces alone, the Dhairs represent 561,438 souls.



DHAIR

OUT CASTE HINDOO TRIBE

BERAR.

400

GAUWLIES.

(401)

THE Gauwlies, or Gowlies, of Central India and Berar are a very ancient race, anterior, according to tradition, to the Gonds and other purely forest tribes, by whom their antiquity is acknowledged. They resemble the Aheers or cowherds of Northern India, and follow the same pursuits. In the Satpoora range of mountains they are believed to have been the sovereigns of the country before the advent of the Mussulmans; and Asseer Gurh and Gawil Gurh, with many other hill forts, were the seats of their power. Both the forts were captured by the Mussulmans, who fortified them according to their own principles, and converted them into their strongholds; and the treacherous capture of Ascerghur, the capital of Asa Aheer, is related in Ferishta's *History of the Kings of Khandesh*. King Mullik Nuseer, under pretence of sending his family to the fort for refuge, dispatched a body of 200 armed men in closed litters, who, on their arrival in the fort, fell upon the Hindoo prince, and put him and his family to death. Asa Aheer appears to have been the last representative of the cowherd or shepherd princes. Throughout Gondwana many architectural remains exist, which are evidently of greater antiquity than the Gonds; and they are attributed to the Gauwlies, who, however, have no traditions of them, though the Gonds, in their own ballads and tales, retain legends which refer to them.

At present the Gauwlies are a simple, pastoral people, who subsist mainly by the produce of their herds. They breed and sell cattle, both cows and oxen, and buffaloes. They also sell ghee, or boiled butter, which they make in large quantities in the season which lasts from September or October, till the commencement of the rainy weather; and the plateau of the Satpoora, which slopes towards the Taptee—indeed the waste lands of the whole province of Gondwana—supply rich and productive pastures. Gauwlies are, however, settled in all the towns and villages of Berar, where they sell milk, curds, whey, and ghee, and in many instances are substantial farmers and cultivators, and in all respects useful to the general communities in which they live. As a class they are simple and

GAUWLIES.

inoffensive, belonging to Hindooism as Sudras, employing Brahmins in their principal rites and ceremonies, and believing in Siva or Mahadeo. There is, however, a strong undercurrent of aboriginal worship and fetishism, and they are probably derived from aboriginal stock. Gauwlies are found in every part of India, and among Hindoo societies are respected because of their protection of cows, and preparers and sellers of all forms of milk. Their food does not differ from that of other Sudras, and they habitually drink spirits in Berar and in the mountains as a remedy against the effects of malaria; at festivals, however, they occasionally indulge to excess. Gauwlies do not intermarry with any other classes of Sudras, and even in their own caste with any except members of their own gotes, or divisions, which are very numerous.



GAUWLIES
HINDOO COWHERDS
BERAR.

401

BANWA FAKEER.

(402)

THIS sect, or class of Mussulman Fakeers, has adopted the above title to express that they have utterly renounced the world. They are very bigoted, and seldom ask alms from Hindoos, whom they hold in contempt. Men of good position sometimes adopt the rules of the order, which are very severe. The new disciple must give up all he has of every description, and must take an oath of celibacy; he is then bathed, and has incense burnt around him, after which he is invested with his conical cap, which is called taj, or crown, and a garment of grave clothes, which consists of a piece of coarse cotton cloth with a slit torn in the centre lengthways wide enough to admit his head, this hangs round his neck, covering him before and behind, and is called kafni. He lets his hair grow, but the chin and upper lip are sometimes shaved, and he wears agate or onyx beads about his neck, carrying a small rosary of wooden beads in his hand or twisted round his wrist. These Fakeers are generally found attached to cemeteries, or to single tombs of local saints, of which they become caretakers. They ask nothing from any one, but sometimes sit down before a house, and will not move till they are provided with what they want, or relieved in some respect. The sect is not very numerous, owing perhaps to the severe conditions attached to the performance of its rules.



BANWA FAKER

MUSSULMAN.

BLRAB.

402.

BYRAGEES.

(403)

BYRAGEES have been described and illustrated before at Nos. 144 and 203; and all that can be said of them here is, that they are represented in the hideous forms which they adopt in so many varieties. Two of them have smeared themselves with white wood ashes and pipe clay, till they are white from head to foot, and have a ghastly appearance when moving. The centre figure wears his own hair, which is very long and matted, tied round his head as a turban, and he has little else by way of covering by night or by day. A deer's hide, or a tiger skin, is a favourite seat, sometimes under a spreading tree, and again in the blazing sun surrounded by a fire. In penance and mortification Byragees far exceed Gosais, and never indulge in the luxuries which many of the latter adopt. As a rule, Byragees are very charitable, and if their offerings exceed their own requirements they are distributed to the poor. There are not many settled in Berar, but groups or companies frequently cross it in coming from the north; that is, from Benares, Muttra, and the source of the Ganges, under vows to visit southern shrines, and their lives are spent in these continual wanderings.



BYRAGEES.

HINDOO DEVOTEES.

BERAR.

403.

KORKOOS.

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THE Korkoos inhabit, for the most part, the wild forest tracts of Baitool and Hooshungabad, and by the census, are returned as 39,114, probably about 40,000 souls. They are nearly allied in character and habits to the Gonds, Bheels, and other forest tribes, and yet are entirely distinct from them in many respects, and the tribes do not intermarry. Korkoos are more migratory than Gonds, and less given to settled pursuits; but they make excellent farm servants, and are both truthful and honest. In appearance they much resemble the Gonds, in the flatness of their faces and prominence of their cheek bones, agreeing with the Mongolian type of feature. They worship Sooryadeo (the sun), and once in three years every family offers in sacrifice a white goat and a white fowl, outside the village, with its face turned to the east. Some rude figures of Hunooman, the monkey deity of Hindoos, are seen about these villages; but, as in the case of the Gonds, do not obtain much reverence. The chief belief is in the power of good and evil sprites and demons, who frequent woods, glens, waterfalls, and the like remarkable natural objects. Their priests are called bomkas, and are elected from among themselves, and perform the necessary sacrifices, especially in cases of sickness, which is believed to proceed from the ill will of the soul of some deceased ancestor; and to ascertain this is the bomka's especial province. A handful of grain is waved over the sick man, which is carried to the bomka, who makes a heap of it on the floor, and holds over it a lighted lamp, suspended from four strings, swinging it gently as he repeats the names of the patient's ancestors. If the lamp stops at any particular name, inquiry is made as to the propitiatory offering, which may be a fowl, a goat, or a pig, &c., and the sacrifice is made. Bomkas are chosen from the villagers, who all sit in a row, a measure is rolled before them, and the person before whom it stops is the bomka to be.

Although Korkoos can hardly be considered to possess "caste," yet they can become polluted in many ways. Smoking out of a stranger's hookah, *liasons* with foreign women, and the like, can be propitiated by fines of goats, pigs, or chickens.

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Fines also extend to killing of some animals: for a cow or bullock, a pig, three goats, and seven chickens; for a kite, five chickens; for a tame cat, seven chickens; and so on: but the list is not a large one. Their marriage ceremonies are five in number, and resemble those of the Gonds; but if there is no objection on the part of the husband, a man can marry another man's wife. She must, however, leave her children behind her. The dead, as with the Gonds, are sometimes burned, but more frequently buried; and the *sidoola*, or funereal rites, are frequently deferred even for years, but after a time the spirit of the deceased becomes troublesome, and has to be laid at rest. This is done by planting a stake in the place of stakes belonging to the *gote*, or tribe of the Korkoos to which the deceased belonged. It is a stout stake, squared and planed, and squared at the top. On one side the sun and moon are carved, with a spider and human ear; below, a rude effigy of the deceased on horseback, with weapons in his hand. When the stake is prepared, it is taken out to the place where cattle rest outside villages, and bathed and anointed with turmeric. That evening the funeral feast is given. Next day the stake is carried to the place sacred to this purpose, which belongs to the particular *gote* or division; and the bones of the deceased, if procurable, or otherwise some bamboo pith which has been sanctified, to represent them, is placed in the hole dug for the purpose of securing the staff. Two *pico* are added, and the stake is finally placed in the hole. A goat and chickens are then sacrificed and eaten. The Korkoo language appears different from the Gond, and independent. It is called a dialect of the Kol, but it does not seem to have been scientifically investigated. (Elliot on the Korkoos, Ant. Soc. Central Provinces).

Korkoos are capital sportsmen, and infallible trackers of beasts of all kinds. Inhabiting dense forests, they become familiar with the haunts and habits of all wild animals, and are invaluable to the keen sportsman. In the group represented they are in attendance on a great English hunter, who is exhibiting his trophy of a bison's head, and will be easily recognised by many.



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ABORIGINAL TRIBE

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WUDDURS.

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THE Wuddurs are one of the wandering tribes of Southern India. They have no settled habitations, and live in huts ingeniously made of a reedy grass, which is woven into a kind of mat with thread, and which, stretched over a frame, forms the roof. The sides are made of the same, an aperture being left for the door. These habitations are perfectly water-tight, even in the heaviest rain. The only furniture of the hut is a bedstead with patchwork quilts, a stool or two, and a few cooking utensils. Yet Wuddurs are not poor by any means. They are very industrious, and earn much money by their work, both in earth and in quarrying stone. Their camps are easily moved, and re-pitched, and in a very short time the huts are taken down, the mats rolled up, and the whole household property laden on their asses, which all possess, or on the small cars drawn by buffaloes which belong to the stonecutters, and are transported to another locality. There are two tribes of Wuddurs, or Wuddiwars; one, which is esteemed the highest, do stone-work and quarry stones. In granite countries they have the art of burning the granite till it rises in flakes, which are of various thicknesses, according to the grain of the rock, and these flakes are afterwards broken into building stones, square or oblong, from the size of ordinary bricks to larger sizes: the fracture is usually clean, and they require no dressing except with the hammer. In trap formations, nodules of basalt are broken with a large hammer, and dressed; but in many cases the Wuddurs make holes in the native rock from two to three inches square and deep, into which they insert steel wedges, and drive them in with hammers till the rock splits. By these means the Wuddurs can produce large monoliths, and the system of work is precisely the same as that which prevailed in the great quarries of Egypt. The stone Wuddurs also build walls of houses of a coarse kind with stone and mud, the stone facings of embankments of tanks, and, in some instances, the sluices as well. They likewise make and dress mill stones, make mortars and pestles, in short, do everything

WUDDURS.

in stone except the fine work executed by stonemasons. These stone Wuddurs are generally men of great size and strength, very black in colour, and with somewhat more regular features, both men and women, than the earth workers. Some of their women, indeed, are very handsome, with perfect figures, which they retain longer than is usual among such tribes.

The earth Wuddurs do not meddle with stonework in any form. Their business is with earth only, in the construction and repair of embankments of tanks, railways, field mounds, roads, and the like. They usually make contracts for such work, the rates of which depend upon the nature of the soil to be excavated, the distance or height it has to be carried, and they perfectly understand the system of measuring work by the cubic yard on the ground marked out for them. The implements they use for excavation are a very heavy pickaxe, with a single blade tipped with steel, and a hoe for loading the baskets. No sooner is a contract taken by the chief of a party, who is styled *naik*, than the whole, men and children, set to work; and it is surprising how much they will manage to do in a day, working both by day and by night, in such proportions as they choose or are able. The earth is transported in baskets, which they make themselves out of date palm branches, and are very strong and serviceable. In the absence of any great embankment works for tanks, the Wuddurs have found congenial employment on all the railways, and there is no lack of work for them; and the large prices allowed for excavation and transports, yield them ample wages. They are, however, very improvident, and are much given to intoxicating drinks, both palm wine and ardent spirit.

Wuddiars are evidently of aboriginal descent. Their languages are Tamil, Teloogoo, and Canarese, with, in rare cases, a smattering of Mahratta and Hindoostanee. Their women, like most of the southern races, do not wear the *choli*, or *bodice*. They eat almost everything. Iguanas, field rats, and some snakes, are delicacies; and all flesh, except that of the cow, or of animals that have died of any disease, is welcome. With this they have bread of sorgum, millets, and other grain, or a stiff porridge; vegetables, onions, and garlic in large proportions.

Among the stone Wuddurs, it is strange to find, as they are utterly illiterate, that they are able to act plays, derived from the Sanscrit, with very considerable skill and power. Their instruction in the long recitations and dialogues is transmitted from generation to generation, and is entirely oral. Women act as well as men, and some of the former attain great skill. The pieces they perform are adaptations of the *Ramayan* and its episodes, the abduction of *Sita* being the most favourite. These recitations are made for village communities and rich families, and are well paid. The language employed is Canarese, Teloogoo, or Tamil, according to the vernacular of the locality.

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Wuddiars, probably from their habits of living apart from ordinary village communities, and constant change of location, have, it appears by Colonel Harvey's reports, fallen under suspicion of dacoity ; but no instances are given of their commission of this crime, and the idea may be altogether imaginary ; and to all appearance they are singularly free from crime of any kind—a simple, industrious people, depending only on their labour for maintenance.



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